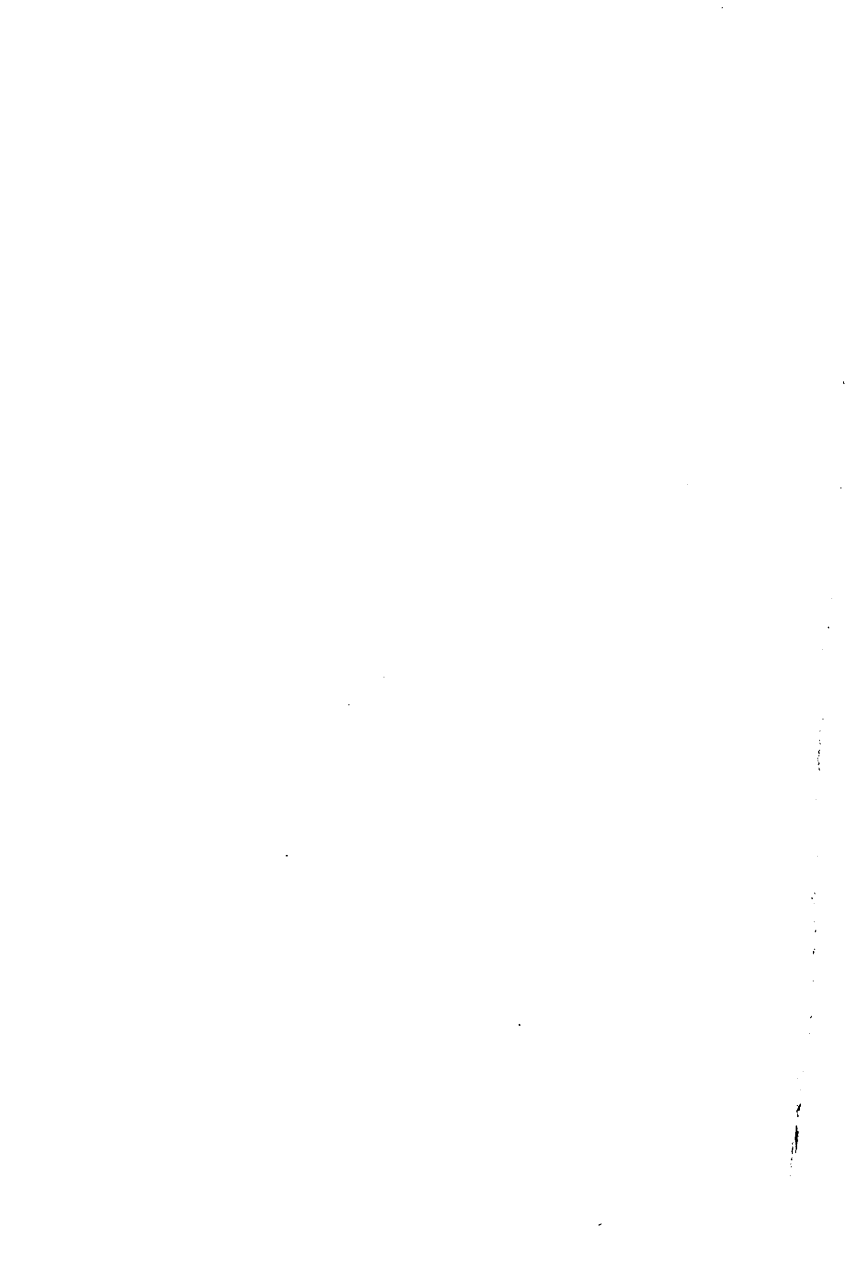


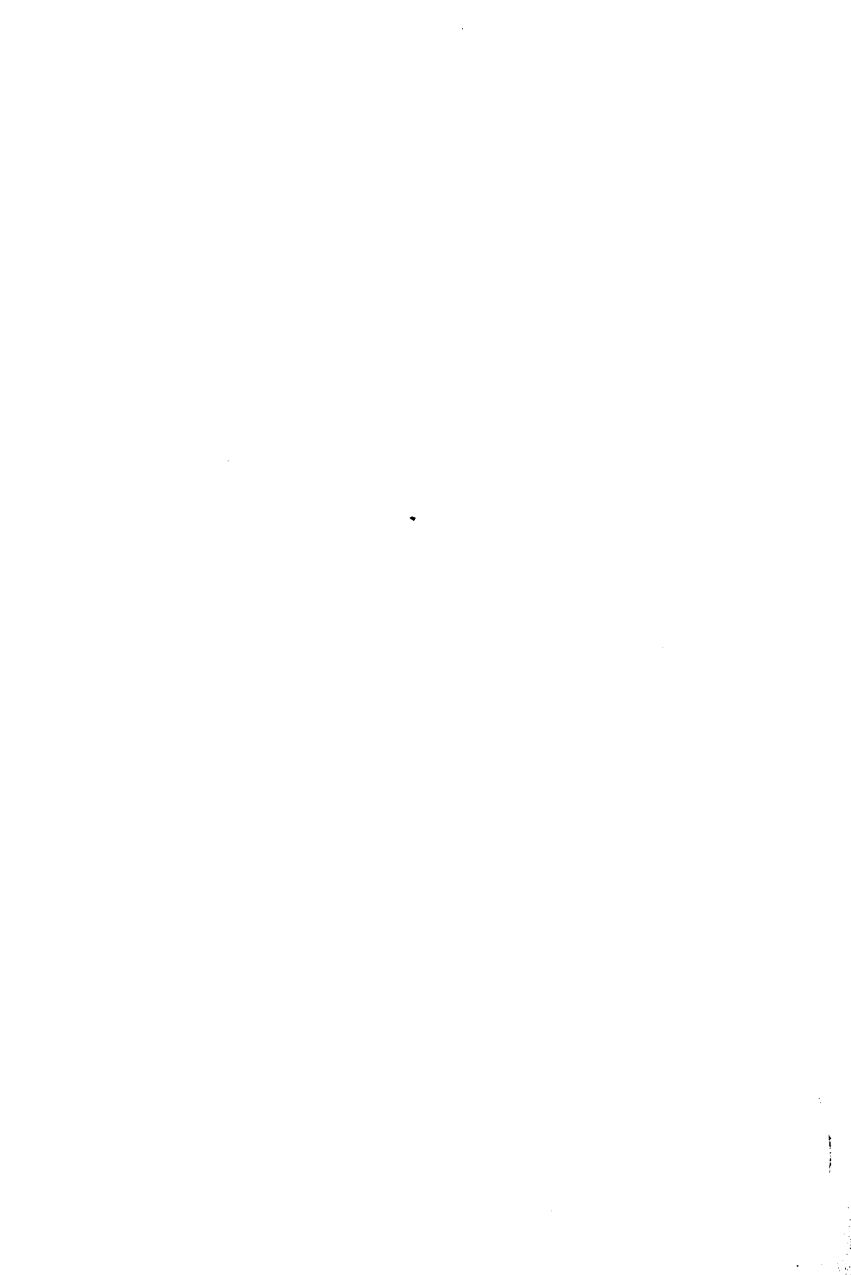
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THE INDIRECT EFFECTS  
OF CHRISTIAN MISSIONS IN INDIA



# THE INDIRECT EFFECTS OF CHRISTIAN MISSIONS IN INDIA

BEING THE SIR PEREGRINE MAITLAND PRIZE  
ESSAY IN CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY, 1927

BY  
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## PREFACE

THIS essay was submitted in competition for the Sir Peregrine Maitland Prize of 1927 in the University of Cambridge. It was awarded the prize, and since the award the examiners have very kindly given me permission, while retaining the original form of the essay in all essentials, to make slight alterations mostly of arrangement. For this permission I am grateful.

The first part of the essay deals with the indirect effect of Christian thought and ideals on Hindu thought and ideals. The second part is a collection of five short essays dealing with various important aspects of Christian Mission work in India, and endeavours to show how this work has itself raised and created important problems worthy of consideration by all interested in the problem of Christian Missions in "foreign" lands. In this section there is a little repetition which I fear is inevitable.

The candidate for the prize is required to state the extent of his obligations to others for his material. I have lived in India for some years and have been able to pick up points here and there in the course of my own work and in contact with Christian missionaries. Indian journals and newspapers have

## Preface

helped me considerably, and I have quoted freely from them. I think I have marked all my quotations. Otherwise the work is entirely my own. For some of the statements made there can be no references, and no authority can be quoted. They are impressions, and as such may be disputed by others of longer residence in India or of greater ability to discern the signs of the times.

I regret not being able to give the references for one or two of my quotations, due to the fact that I am separated from my papers.

I do not wish to appear to be under-estimating the value of the work of the Christian Missionaries in India. On the contrary I have a high appreciation of Christian Mission work in India, and know something of its difficulties. I know a little, too, of the fine characters of most of the men and women, Indian and foreign, who are engaged in it.

It is a belief that many of the difficulties and problems are of our own making, and are capable of removal and solution, that prompts me to offer this contribution in the hope that it will help us to see His Will more clearly.

I am indebted to my friend the Rev. P. L. Hedley, M.A., B.D., for seeing the book through the Press, and for the preparation of the Index.

R. S. W.

23rd May, 1928

## PART I



## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTORY

IN considering the question of the indirect effects of Christian Missions in India the difficulty at once appears of differentiating between the effects of Christian Missions and the effects of Western civilization. Many things which we shall notice in the course of this essay will divide themselves under these two heads—they are the indirect effects of contact with the West and in only a few cases are they influences flowing directly from the activity of Christian Missions. We can plead to be allowed to consider such influences because our Western civilization is a Christian civilization—at least nominally—and 200,000 Westerners cannot be resident in a country such as India without their civilization having indirect influences. And if that civilization is an amalgam of Hebrew, Greek and Roman elements, it has also received a definitely Christian bias. If then what is here put down as the indirect influences of Christian Missions in India can also be put down to the indirect influences of Western civilization—perhaps it will not be regarded as a serious error.

It has also to be remembered that the Government of India for some time now has been a

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foreign Government, the British Government. The ruling race has been Christian, and although they have declared for themselves a policy of religious neutrality, their Christian influence has been considerable.

Nor are the Christian influences in the land confined to the Missions. Indeed it is quite impossible to separate and assess the indirect effect of Christian Missions in India apart from the indirect effect of Christianity in India—and the latter may flow quite outside the missionary movement. But the important point is the diffusion and indirect effects of Christian ideas in India, whether these be imported by Missionaries or other Westerners, or were introduced by Indians themselves after a sojourn in the West.

There are two aspects of Christianity represented in India to-day : that represented by the New Testament, and that represented by the so-called Christian men and women; and the latter has had a far greater influence than the former. The Christianity of the Christ in the Gospels has not had a very great influence in India, but the Christianity of European culture has had a great influence. The latter is represented not so much by the Christian Missionaries as by the large number of Westerners in other walks of life. Of the Western Christians dwelling in India, Missionaries represent only some three per cent. of the whole community,

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and some of the social reforms accomplished in the last century owe more to the influence of Government servants, planters and business men than to that of the Christian Missionaries.

A further point to be noted here is that Christian Missions in India, at least for the later period, have always been Missions of the Western branch of the Church. The Eastern Church so far as I know has now no Missions in India. The Syrian Church of South India, especially on the Malabar Coast, has a long history, going back, some contend, to the Apostle St. Thomas himself. But while Apostolic foundation seems to be at least doubtful, it is an ancient branch of the Church. More probably that Church is the product of early Missionary propaganda on the part of the Nestorian Church in Persia, but that Missionary enterprise ceased at a remote date and certainly was not active within this present millennium. The product of that effort is the Syrian Church of Mylapore and the Malabar Coast, which was not itself an active evangelizing agency. It had so far forgotten its Master's call that early in the last century the Church Missionary Society sent special helpers and Missionaries to the Malabar Syrian Church in an attempt to rejuvenate it. The special effort ended in dispute and quarrels, so that the help was withdrawn and the Church Missionary Society itself set out on independent Christian Mission work almost alongside



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the Syrian Church; but its influence on the Syrian Church has been profound. That Church is now a much more active Christian body and more conscious of its responsibilities to the non-Christian population by which it is surrounded; so that the effort has been successful, though indirectly so. This branch of the Eastern Church has been practically without influence till our own days, and therefore I hold to my statement that we shall have to consider only the Christian missionary activity of the Western branch of the Church.

To assess or state the indirect influences of Christian Mission work is far from easy. First we must ask what is the intention of Christian Missions in this country. If we are to consider only the present-day Mission policy, we shall see very few indirect influences, for it is a broad policy, willing to engage in religious teaching, study of religion, education, secular as well as religious, medical work and social service. It is a broad programme and it would contend that the fact that others are emulating it in serving the people is not an indirect effect but direct. The founding of, say, the Servants of India Society it would contend was a direct effect of the influence of Christian Missions. But I will take it that we are to consider such a movement as an indirect effect and not a direct effect. If we could take the programme of Christian Missions to be that of St. Francis Xavier,

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who merely demanded of his converts ability to repeat certain Christian formulæ, then we could have great scope for the development of our subject—but in our day we can no longer do this.

Mentioning this reminds us that the indirect effects have been of a twofold nature. By engaging in this activity the indirect influences have re-acted on the very Christianity that we preach, so that there are indirect effects here as well as on the people and country round about.

As Dr. Gore says, “The religion which actually won Europe and is called Christianity owed almost as much to the Greek as to the Jew; and if India is to call itself Christian, its Christianity will, again, owe as much to India as to the Europe which evangelized it.” This is true, and this reflex action on Missions themselves and on Christianity is perhaps the most important indirect effect of Christian Missions in India. At first this was not seen by our predecessors—indeed it is an attitude of only this century and this generation, but it is very widely accepted at our time of day.

Then perhaps the best way to lay out our material will be to survey all the larger fields of missionary activity, and by examining them individually extricate their indirect effects. This involves a survey of the whole of the Christian Missionary activity in India and a discussion of its problems; but we must face it, for only thus shall we be able

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to see how the indirect effects have influenced the Missions themselves. And I choose to do this the more readily, for I consider this to be a more valuable task than the alternative of examining in detail India's social conditions and trying to see there the indirect effects of Christian Mission influence. In this latter field we have to consider the important movements for the abolition of widow burning, for widow re-marriage, for female education, for the removal of untouchability, the literary renaissance, the raising of the age of consent and many other similar social movements. But I do not think that all these elevating movements can be put down to indirect effects of Christian Missions. In fact I am sure that they cannot. The influences are much more complex than that. The first influences may be Christian, but the Christian influences in the land are not confined to Christian Missions, and in my opinion it would be wrong to give the credit for these movements solely to Christian Missions. The foreign Christian population of India is quite considerable apart from Missions. The Government is that of a Christian power. Government officials, a large part of the Army, the commercial class, the planting community are in large part British, and it is their combined influence that has brought these movements to life.

The influences which have brought this about are Western and perhaps the most potent has been

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the earnest efforts of the Government to rule impartially for the good of the people. Thus to treat all races, religions and castes as equal and to give to every one strict justice has been an object lesson of the utmost power. Add to this all that Government has done for the sick, the famine-stricken, the orphans and the lepers, the ignorant and the down-trodden, and you have here the source from which much influence has flowed.

I, therefore, do not discuss these large social movements in detail, but in all humility consider that it is a more useful task to endeavour to examine the re-action on the Missions themselves which has been created by Christian Missionary activity in India. Their work has raised problems which were not foreseen and perhaps the time has come to halt and ask "*Quo vadis?*" Nearly all the British Missionary Societies and most of the Continental and American Societies are finding that their financial support is not growing at a rate that will enable them to keep pace with their obligations on the field. In fact, I doubt if it is growing at all. I do not know a single Society that has a surplus on its budget. All that I know have fairly considerable accumulated deficits. This being so, perhaps the following discussion will enable us all to see more clearly what is the aim of Christian Missions in India and how best to attain that aim.

## CHAPTER II

### SOCIAL REFORM MOVEMENTS

HAD never a single convert been made the work of the Christian Missions in India could not be set down as a failure. The Christian influence is a subtle thing, like the wind blowing where it listeth, and no man knoweth the place thereof; and in India certainly it has permeated the country. Its source, however, has not only been direct from the Christian Missions as such, but has also been from the large British and Western non-missionary community resident in India and at least nominally Christian, and from the example of a Government also nominally Christian. In some respects the influence of the non-missionary Christian community and the Government has been the more potent. Not that the Government has ever taken sides religiously and preferred Christian institutions before those of other religions or of no religion; neither has it aided directly in the promulgation of Christian ideas. It has not directly fostered the Christian Church nor specially cared for its Christian subjects. But it has administered the country on a basis of righteousness, which is natural to man as man. It has administered justice as unto men who are all equally members of the

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state with equal rights as men. In the administration of law, it has maintained caste rights and caste privileges, but has never allowed the rights of caste to violate the person of man. It has exercised the principles of universal benevolence and righteousness common to all men, and its influence has been hostile to the baser elements in the Hindu cultus. The government had to prohibit sati, female infanticide, self-immolation at festivals and other such practices in which Hinduism had entrenched itself, but its prohibition was based on humanitarian grounds and not on religious grounds. The Government administers Hindu law to its Hindu subjects and Mohammedan law to its Mohammedan subjects, but in the administration of that law it deals out impartially—justice; and that has been a great object lesson to the Indians.

Often the influence of the non-missionary Western community, of the Government and of the missionaries has combined to effect some reform, as it did in the abolition of Sati, but it is extremely difficult if not impossible to separate them and to say that this is an indirect effect of the Christian Missions in India and that an indirect influence of the Western community. The influence cannot be thus analysed and separated. It is one influence—the influence of Christianity in India, or perhaps not even thus geographically located, but of Christianity in the world.

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The influence has shown itself in two ways—*(a)* social reform movements, *(b)* modifications of ultimate doctrines. Taking them in this order we can proceed.

The “Indian Social Reformer” often states “organized social service work in India can be said to date only from the advent of Christian Missionaries.” It is certain that the manifold philanthropic and social activities of the Christian Missions not only on behalf of the Christian community, but on behalf of the depressed everywhere in the land have roused the other religious communities to a sense of their responsibility for the poorer brethren with whom they live. The founding of the “Servants of India Society” is itself one of the indirect effects of Christian Missions in India. Not that we can say that the Indian religions had no sense of responsibility for the lower classes or the poorer classes—but it can be said justly that it needed contact with the Christian Missions and particularly with the Protestant Christian Missions before this philanthropic sense was awakened, and undoubtedly the finest work of this nature has been done among the depressed classes and the outcastes.

A very large proportion of the Christian community in India has been recruited from the outcastes. These people are Hindus—at least now

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they are usually classed as such, but the very fact that they are thus included in the community is an indirect effect of Christian Missions in India. They were not always so classed. They are below the caste level and their touch pollutes a caste man; more, in some cases even their approach beyond a specified distance pollutes. They are obliged to live in separate quarters or in little villages of their own called "cheries"—usually they are some little distance away from the caste village. They are denied the use of the public conveniences of the village, such as the well from which to draw water—they are not allowed to pass along the caste street nor even to enter the caste villages. Sometimes in going to a strange village whose exact location I have not known, I have been met by an "outcaste Christian" who was to conduct me from the main road to the village. Whenever the path went through a Brahmin street this fellow Christian and brother in the Lord would not dare to follow it, but leaving the track would run round the village by way of the paddy fields and meet me at the other end of the village. Even though a Christian he dare not go through the Brahmin street. Had he done so, he would have been beaten by the caste people. Another example of St. Paul's dictum—"all things are lawful but all things are not expedient." In some parts of India the outcaste must not approach a caste man nearer



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than a specified number of paces, and if the two meet on a public road the outcaste must retreat to the fields on the side of the road and maintain pollution distance till the caste man passes.

There are many temples in India which are maintained out of common funds. In some cases the expense involved in maintenance is met by the State. These temples are closed against a large section of the Hindu population on the ground that they are untouchable; and although the roads round a temple are also maintained at public expense, very often the untouchables are not allowed to use them.

As the Census Report of 1901 (Vol. I, pp. 41-2) says :

“ These people have little to lose by forsaking the creed of their forefathers. As long as they remain Hindus they are daily and hourly made to feel that they are of commoner clay than their neighbours. Any attempts which they may make to educate themselves or their children are actively discouraged by the classes above them; caste restrictions prevent them from quitting the toilsome, uncertain and undignified means of subsistence to which custom had condemned them, and taking to a handicraft or trade: they are snubbed and repressed on all public occasions; are refused admission even to the temples of their gods; and can hope for no more helpful partner of their joys and sorrows

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than the unkempt and unhandy maiden of the paracheri with her primitive notion of comfort and cleanliness."

The outcaste is usually quite illiterate, for while Government regulations allow them to attend the Government schools, public opinion usually does not. I have myself seen outcaste children who wished to learn, obliged to sit on the verandah of the school and listen to the teacher through a door or a window. And these people number sixty millions in India. Christian Missions paid their attentions to this class and found it a most fruitful field to cultivate. Large numbers came over to Christianity, and when Christians, no longer did they, in theory, pollute and no longer were they untouchable. They gained a higher social status—at least in theory if not in practice—and they always had available the help of an influential Christian Western Missionary, if it was required, to aid in establishing their new position. This landslide to Christianity raised serious questions for Hinduism and led to a searching of the Scriptures, and it was found that the supposed untouchables were really not untouchable except by custom. They were not legally untouchable. Then arose quite a strong and powerful movement within Hinduism for the abolition of untouchability and of the leaders of this movement Mahatma Gandhi is the finest figure. Much progress has been

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made in the cause, and the barrier shows signs of weakening if not of falling completely. Government is more anxious to see the spirit of its educational regulations carried out and untouchables and caste children educated at the same schools—as I have seen them myself. Roads have been opened to the untouchables and they have won the right of entry into certain temples hitherto closed to them.

An Indian writer (Mr. R. P. Singh) thus deals with untouchability :

“ Another very vexed and difficult question is that of untouchability. Untouchability varies in different degrees in different localities, and it is prevalent in different ways among different sections of the Hindus. In some cases it has assumed such ugly and ignominious forms that the community has obtained a bad name for ill-treating a section of its own people with cruelty and iniquity of a most objectionable nature. Every Indian knows its lamentable story. It would, therefore, be idle to enumerate the different types of untouchability openly practised within the fold of the Hindu community. Some of these forms of untouchability are commonly familiar, but there are several extreme and peculiar types prevalent in the south of the peninsula, about which many people of the north will be surprised to learn. The commonest form is when the untouchable caste cannot touch or be touched on by the other so-called high castes

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of the Hindus. The untouchable thus leads the segregated life of an outcaste. In another form it spreads over the entire orthodox Hindu community in matters of food and drink. This system of untouchability exists among even the high castes themselves without causing any feelings of insult or casting any stigma of inferiority. It is a peculiar institution within the pale of Hinduism, existing without justification and devoid of all dictates of reasonableness and humanity. These restrictions frequently cause great hardship and inconvenience. The principles upon which the system was originally based have altogether been forgotten and vanished.

“Misconceptions abound in this matter of untouchability as abundantly as in many other social and political problems that obtain in this country. No one wants any person to become unclean or to take unclean food or drink foul water, but simply to do what is barely just and proper. Abolishing untouchability does not mean that every man should dine with another person in the same dish without any regard to cleanliness, or social intercourse; but not to touch a human being or to smell pollution in a slight, harmless, accidental touch with another human being is an emphatic denial of God who is the Creator of all. The solution is an easy one, and requires simply a clear understanding of the case, the sacrificing of one's long-standing prejudices and exercising of a little

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determination in effecting the reform. Otherwise, the untouchable becomes a Christian or a Moham-medan in a minute, and then poses as a peer or superior of the most proud Hindu ; and in that case the latter feels absolutely no hesitation in embracing him with open arms. Can ignorance and blindness go further ? ”<sup>1</sup>

Here is the paragraph under the heading of “ Untouchability ” from the “ Indian Social Reformer ” report of the 1926 All-India Social Conference :

“ The amelioration of the condition of the untouchables is progressing fast, and caste Hindu prejudice is slowly dying out. Reports are received from several places in Northern India of tanks and wells being freely thrown open to the untouchables by caste Hindus. The difficulties in the way of the admission of children of untouchables to schools are being gradually minimized. Especially is this the case with Madras and Bombay. The Madras Council recently passed a Bill to amend the Local Boards Act of 1920, with a view to removing some of the social disabilities under which the Adi-Dravidas are suffering in the matter of the use of roads and markets. The awakening among Adi-Dravidas in Madras is largely due to the efforts of Mr. Veerian, who represented them in the last Council. Among the various Conferences that

<sup>1</sup> ? The Indian Social Reformer.

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were held may be mentioned the Anti-Untouchability Conference at Amraoti, the Fifth Andhra Conference, the All-India Depressed Classes Leaders' Conference, and the Madras Adi-Dravida Conference. Some of the States have also been following a sympathetic policy towards the untouchables. The Mysore University Senate resolved recently to exempt students belonging to the depressed classes from payment of examination fees for a further period of five years. The Cochin Government have ordered that stipends should be granted to pupils of the depressed classes and also that those who are fit should be appointed as teachers. The Dalit Uddhar Sabha, Delhi, has prepared a scheme for a model village for the housing of the depressed classes in Delhi. It is a pity that Swami Shraddhanand, who did so much for the untouchables and who started the *Liberator* specially to campaign against the curse of untouchability, should not have been spared long to carry on his great work. It is reported from Hyderabad (Deccan) that the depressed classes of the place have done away with the evil custom of drinking, and that many have taken to vegetarian diet, while some have given up animal sacrifices."

The 1927 session of the Indian National Social Conference meeting at Madras passed the following resolution about untouchability :

" This Conference views with grave apprehension

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the continuation of the practice of untouchability in India, and exhorts Hindus of all classes to remove all restrictions imposed upon the so-called 'untouchables' in the matter of admission to schools, colleges and hostels, use of public roads, wells, tanks and choultries, and entry into places of worship, and thus bring about a greater solidarity in Hindu Society ; and it pledges its full support to these classes for every proper effort by them to get rid of these evils. This Conference is further of opinion that Government grant should not be made and affiliation refused to the educational institutions which exclude children on the ground of race or religion or colour."

It is my opinion that this whole consideration of the question of untouchability has been raised by the large number of untouchables who have joined the Christian Church. The indirect effect has been that Hinduism has had more carefully to demarcate its boundaries, the untouchables have been admitted as Hindus, the impossibility and injustice of a continuance of their disabilities has been realized, and the Christian doctrine of the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of all men has been given a new emphasis. Doctor A. Lakshmanaswami Mudaliar at this same conference said: "God has made everyone equal, and the image of God rests in everyone's heart. Therefore there was no question of doubt that this inhuman system of un-

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touchability was incompatible with human ingenuity."

This movement against untouchability is not to be confused with any movement for the removal of caste divisions. It often is so confused, but my own opinion is that caste is now as firmly held by the majority of Hindus as ever it was.

"This Conference is emphatically of opinion that the caste system is the greatest obstacle in the way of national unity, and that national solidarity cannot be achieved unless the caste system is abolished root and branch. This Conference accordingly resolves to carry on a vigorous propaganda throughout the country to awaken the intelligentsia as well as the masses to the iniquities of the caste system with a view to its abolition."

This resolution was adopted at the 1927 Indian National Social Conference, and while I do not attach great importance to it, nor expect much to be done about it, it certainly notes a distinct advance on anything previously recorded by this Conference on the same subject.

Wherever it has gone, one of the most conspicuous achievements of Christianity has been the raising of the status of the women of the community. It is needless to stress here the general position of women in India. Certainly it is improving, but there is yet much room for further improvement. Within its own fold Christianity has done much



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for women. Take education alone. Of the total female population of India 21 per thousand are literate. Of the Indian Christian female population 210 per thousand are literate. Of the larger communities in India it is the most literate. This activity within the Church has reacted outside, and now most important social movements include in their programme the amelioration of the lot of Indian women. Thinking Hindus are paying attention to the problem, and women's questions are much to the fore at the present day.

In 1829 Lord Bentinck prohibited within the British provinces the practice of Sati. Up to that time when a man died his widow was allowed to mount the funeral pyre and be burned along with his body. Those who did not thus mount the pyre had henceforth to live a life of the severest asceticism. By the beginning of last century this widow-burning had reached huge proportions and several thousands mounted the pyre every year. In the south it was particularly alarming when a king died, for then all his wives mounted the pyre and were burnt to death. The movement for the prohibition of this practice was strongly supported by the Serampore Missionaries, some Calcutta Western merchants and some enlightened Hindus, including Ram Mohan Ray. An excellent example of the indirect effects of Christian Missions in India.

Widows then and now are called upon to lead

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a life of drudgery. In most parts of India after the death of their husband, their head is shaved, they are forbidden to wear any jewellery, and their cloth must be of one colour—in the case of Brahmin widows usually white. They live with their mother-in-law and act the part of a Cinderella in the house. Before 1856 it was not legal for them to re-marry, but in that year the Government of India passed an Act legalizing such re-marriages. Yet till quite lately this Act has not been made much use of. The Social Reform Movement has made this one of its main aims and has done a great deal to commend re-marriage in all parts of the country. Marriage bureaux have been established and widows' homes provided, and in consequence a certain number of such marriages now take place yearly in all ranks of Indian society. The movement has done much to alleviate the hard lot of the Indian widow and to lighten her burden of suffering. The provision of widows' homes is surely a direct imitation of the similar Christian Mission organization.

The women of India on the whole are purdah. From very early times the ladies of royal harems in India lived in seclusion, and wealthy families copied the royal household in this. The Mohammedan invasion of the twelfth century made the custom more widespread. The Mohammedan conquerors kept their women shut up in the ladies' apartments, and the conquered Hindu followed

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the custom of his then social superiors. And in the turmoil which characterized Muslim rule for centuries Hindu women were safer if shut up and guarded. Thus the Zenana system grew up, and all high-caste Hindus living in Mohammedan provinces adopted the custom of the north. In some districts of India a high-caste woman to-day seldom leaves the seclusion of the Zenana, and if she does she is heavily veiled and moves in closed and blinded carriages. In the south, where Mohammedan rule did not last long or did not arise, the old freedom remains and the women of the lower castes live a very free life.

But Christian teaching and Western example have made a very serious impact on educated opinion in this matter. There has been a distinct change in this century, and in the Presidency cities it is no unusual sight to see Hindu gentlemen driving out with their wives and children in the evening or walking with them on the Marina at Madras or on the Esplanade at Bombay. The Indian National Social Conference of 1927 passed the following resolution on this subject :

“ This Conference is emphatically of opinion that the system of purdah as it exists among the Hindus as well as Mohammedans is prejudicial to the healthy development of women and urges its discontinuance.”

The question of child-marriage is claiming the

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earnest and serious attention of all who have the welfare of India at heart. At all social conferences it is discussed and there is much progress to report. The Social Conference already quoted passed the following resolution :

“The Conference deems it essential for the healthy and free development of Indian manhood and womanhood that the minimum marriageable age of boys and girls should be raised to twenty-one and sixteen respectively; and it recommends that the monogamous principle with the right of divorce for suitable reasons may be introduced.”

I have little hesitation in saying that the ages here suggested are far in advance of public opinion in India, but they are something to aim at. At present, except among the Parsees and Christians, child-marriage is almost universal. Children are married before puberty is reached—a Hindu father who does not marry his daughter before the menses appear commits sin. Marriages when the contracting parties are both below the age of five years are not uncommon—and below ten frequent. There are widows in India below the age of five and they are not allowed to re-marry! There is a strong movement to raise the age of marriage; and adult marriages, though still the exception, are becoming pleasingly more frequent every year.

I cannot help thinking that the attention now paid in India to the amelioration of the lot of women

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by allowing widow re-marriage, raising the age of consent, uplifting the devadasis, preventing child-marriages, and abolishing the system of purdah, are all indirect results of the advent of Christianity into India. In this all Christians in India can rejoice and not least the Christian Missions.

Christian organizations, such as the Young Men's Christian Association, have been copied by the Young Men's Buddhist Association and the Young Men's Indian Association. The social work of the Christian Missions has stimulated the formation of missions to the Depressed Classes and the work of the Servants of India Society. The Co-operative movement has of late years done much for the advancement of the poorer people and the lifting of the yoke of poverty. In our own country this century has seen a change in emphasis on the part of the Christian gospel. The Christian Church has shown a renewed concern for the welfare of the people as a community, with the result that social service is much more prominent with us now than it ever was. We preach a "social gospel." No longer can a man be content with his own salvation and be regardless of the welfare of his brethren. The command to love our neighbour as ourselves has taken a new position in our Christian teaching in the West, and that with far-reaching consequences. As so often happens this movement

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in the West has had its counterpart in the East, and Hinduism to-day has a social consciousness it never had before. So it is with the awakening of India to a sense of her national consciousness. Christian Missions by the spread of education doubtless contributed to this, and so far it can be claimed as an indirect effect of Christian Missions. It seems to be part of a movement of the spirit of freedom which bloweth where it listeth and no man knoweth the place thereof. It has gone over Turkey, Egypt, India and China. Where it will end it is difficult to foretell. The new currents started by the great national movement of recent years have helped to bring social service into the forefront. India realizes that to attain national status and national rights she will need to be fit for it, and she turns to consider her own questions of poverty and the wrongs of her own society. Missions to the Depressed Classes, schools for outcaste children, widows' homes, industrial schools, women's rescue work, are all signs of a quickened social conscience. The methods adopted are largely copied from the organization of Christian Missions, and the social reform movement itself has arisen largely through contact with Christian ethics and Christian ideas, taken to the East by Westerners of a Christian persuasion of faith—be they Missionaries, Government servants, educationists, planters or business men.

## CHAPTER III

### INFLUENCE ON OTHER RELIGIONS

THE religion of India is Hinduism. Other religions are to be found—Mohammedanism, Buddhism, Parseeism, Jainism and Christianity. But fundamentally the religion of India is Hinduism. Buddhism was native to India, but practically has been driven out of the plains to the hill country near Thibet, Burma and Ceylon. Mohammedanism is an imported religion, but in numbers is next to Hinduism. Parseeism is imported. Jainism is a branch of Hinduism. Christianity is an imported religion. But withal Hinduism still embraces nearly 75 per cent. of the people of India. About 20 per cent. are Mohammedan, and the remaining 5 per cent. are Christians, Buddhists, Jains, Parsees or of other faiths.

Of the influence of Christianity on its neighbouring religions in India—Hinduism, Mohammedanism, Parseeism, Buddhism—it is difficult to write. To do so accurately and effectively would require a much greater knowledge of these ancient faiths than I possess and much greater ability than I can claim. Yet that there should be an influence is very obvious. Buddhism influenced Hinduism as did also Mohammedanism at a later date. So

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also has Christianity. No two great religions can live side by side without influencing each the other. Christianity has been a great purger of the ancient faiths. Coming in all its purity, in its light men have seen light. Christian ethics have been accepted as the norm to which other systems of ethics must approximate. The disgusting superstitions and idolatrous elements of Hinduism have been thrust into the background, and the more elevating tenets put into the foreground. Hinduism is now ashamed of its vulgarity and its obscene practices. The nautch girls, without whose dancing in days gone by no big function in India was complete, now keep in the background. A century ago these women were much more in the public eye than they are to-day. "The presence of these women at the temple services and in the great processions leads to a great deal of vice among young Hindus, and their introduction into the homes of the people on festive occasions has done endless harm."<sup>1</sup> Missionaries have protested in the name of morality and decency against the whole system, and some of the social reformers have also joined in these protests, till now the appearances of these girls are much less frequent than they were. Public opinion on this subject is not yet strong enough to justify the government in abolishing the whole system of devadasis, but certainly it is moving in

<sup>1</sup> J. N. Farquhar, *Modern Religious Movements in India*, p. 410.



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that direction, and the better minds in Hinduism are ashamed at its continuance. The Christian teaching that God is Spirit and that they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth has been largely accepted. Animal and vegetarian sacrifices to the deity, ceremonial bathing, pilgrimages, and self-torture have been abandoned by some sects of reforming Hindus, and where they have not been given up educated men are becoming just a little ashamed of them.

The Protestant Christian contention that sacred books can be of no value unless they are understandable by the people has led all the reforming movements, the Jain, Sikh, Parsee, Mohammedan and Hindu, to produce translations of the sacred books which they use, and to write all fresh books in the vernaculars of the people.

The contact with Christianity has produced a revival in the study of the ancient Hindu literature. The contact has raised such numerous and important problems that some authority is needed, and men are more and more turning to the ancient books and the ancient laws for light on the new problems.

Wherever there is a highly-organized religious creed Christianity fails to make conversions on any large scale. When brought face to face with Judaism and Mohammedanism it has been almost powerless. Among Hindus its success in gaining converts is almost entirely restricted to the

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less highly organized sects—the outcastes and lower castes. The higher castes have not responded in any marked numbers to the call of Christianity.

The presence of an active Missionary religion alongside Hinduism has had the effect of consolidating the Hindus themselves. Hinduism in contact with ideas of rule, organized purpose and moral law is organizing itself and delimiting its frontiers, but in so doing it is losing some of its strength, which lay in its adaptability. We have already seen how Hinduism has had to face the question of deciding what is a Hindu, and how its frontiers have had to be marked. Fortunately for it, so far, it has not been called upon to produce a creed.<sup>1</sup> I say fortunately for Hinduism, for it is very doubtful if it could produce a creed. As the Greek gods died when they were systematized, so would the Hindu gods. While Hinduism is inarticulate as a system of belief and incoherent as a faith, the apparent danger of anarchy has been averted by its fully organised and articulated social system. Caste carries on the burden of the whole system. But time will wear out this latter, based

<sup>1</sup> Sir Sivaswami Aiyar, in the *Indian Social Reformer*, of 14th April, 1928, writes :—

“ We have all a more or less vague idea of what Hinduism is, but it would baffle the ingenuity of the learned to lay down a comprehensive and at the same time sharp and logical definition of Hinduism. It is the accommodating capacity of Hinduism that has enabled it in the past to absorb many communities and many religious beliefs, and to resist the shocks of collision with alien and hostile races and religions.”

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as it is on prejudice and privilege. Will both the cultus and the religion go together ? The educated Hindu does not believe in his religion, yet he does outwardly practise it ; while the Christian believes in his religion, but does not outwardly observe it.<sup>1</sup>

A Bengali, writing in the *Hindustan Review*, says of Christianity : “ It has given us Christ and taught us noble moral and spiritual lessons which we have discovered anew in our own scriptures and thereby satisfied our self-love and made them our very own. It has awakened a new spirit of enquiry in the drooping Hindu mind. It has made Hinduism conscious of its greatness. It has held up to view the baneful effects of certain soul-degrading customs which used to prevail and prevail still in Hindu society. In short it has quickened it with a new life the full fruition of which is not yet.”<sup>2</sup>

Mohammedanism has influenced Hinduism and Hinduism has influenced Mohammedanism. Their customs have become peculiarly intermingled. “ At some of the Mohammedan ceremonies cloths are distributed in Hindu manner and sandal paste is used. The marriage ceremonies, instead of keeping to the simple form prescribed by the Quoran, have been greatly elaborated and even made to include processions. A necklet of black beads which is formally put round the neck like the Hindu tali

<sup>1</sup> See “ Action and Reaction of Christianity and Hinduism in India,” by Macnicol, *Hibbert Journal*, vi.

<sup>2</sup> Quoted by Macnicol, *Hibbert Journal*, Vol. vi, p. 73.

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has also come into use, and the women wear bracelets which are broken when they become widows. The religious customs of Hindu and Mohammedan have also become curiously blended in several instances. Hindus take a leading part in the celebration of Mohurran in Madras city. Passages of the Quoran are sometimes chanted at Hindu festivals. Though the Quoran discourages astrology, lower class Mussalmans will consult panchangam Brahmans about the chance of success of their enterprises. Some of the Brahmans thus consulted will send half of the fee so obtained to the Mussalman Mosque at Nagore near Negapatam and will even offer sugar and flowers at that shrine though they endeavour to excuse this act by saying that the saint to whom it is consecrated was originally a Brahman. Mussalman women of the lower classes break coco-nuts at Hindu temples in fulfilment of vows. Strangest of all, there is a Hindu temple at a village called Uraiur, two miles from Srirangam, which is sacred to a goddess called Tulukka Nachian—or the Mussalman body, who is said to be the wife of the Hindu god Ranganatha at Srirangam.”<sup>1</sup>

I quote the following from the National Christian Council Review for February, 1926 : “ Six thousand Mohammedans of Nadia accepted Christianity. They accepted Christianity and almost in the twinkling of an eye became Hindu in habits of

<sup>1</sup> Census of India Report, 1901. Vol. xv. Part I. pp. 133-4.

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life and thought. They are at present not differentiable from the fourteen thousand Hindu Namasudra Christians of Lower and Eastern Bengal. The Christians of Nadia have given up beef-eating (as a regular habit), their Arabic names and their Mohammedan dress, and have generally adopted the Hindu-Bengali manner of life. Most of them belong to the Church of England and the Roman Catholic Church. They burn incense, have flowers and candles in their churches, they thoroughly enjoy abundance of vernacular music, both vocal and instrumental, sankirtans with khols karthals (drums and cymbals) and stringed instruments, the method and spirit of which are purely Vaishnava Hindu. . . . The fact is that the Indian Mussalman convert, in spite of all the rigid and insistent requirements of Islam, still preserves a Hindu soul which has not been crushed altogether. Even the Moguls and Pathans living side by side with Hindus for centuries have been inwardly imbibing Hindu ideals and sentiments to a considerable degree. But the vast majority of Indian Mussalmans are not foreigners, but true-born sons of the soil."

It is thus with Hinduism and Mohammedanism. So also has Christianity influenced Hinduism. The most important result of this contact is that men have come to see more and more clearly that some system of Monotheism is the only creed

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possible for reasonable men. The great majority of Hindus have a firm belief in one God—supreme—and this also involves an idea of a single and in some respects personal God. The ordinary oath of the Law Courts is : “ I will speak the truth believing Parameshwar to be present and watching me.” This Monotheistic idea is not inconsistent with the old Vedas, but it lay hidden there and only now is developing, due to contact with Islam as well as with Christianity. Some credit for this development must be given to Islam, for that religion above all else stands for a strict Monotheistic faith.

Hinduism perhaps had never lost the sense of the underlying unity of the universe—certainly it was never troubled with the dualism which periodically crops up in our Western systems of thought. But if it had not quite lost it there was a danger that a system of gods many and lords many was growing up. The emphasis was put on the many manifestations instead of on the underlying unity. Now it is changed, and I doubt whether we are any longer justified in singing :

The heathen in his blindness  
Bows down to wood and stone.

He no longer does so—if he ever did—really. He is Monotheistic. The Samaj movements have grasped this fact and used it greatly. This fact and the success that they have had has greatly helped Christian missions. They have prepared

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men's minds for Monotheism and accustomed them to Theistic language. The Samaj in many cases has been the forerunner preparing the way for Christianity; and membership of a Samaj has been but a half-way resting-house in the movement towards Christianity. I treat of the Samaj movements a little later.

Following a revival of definite Monotheism there has come a general but qualified acceptance of the doctrine of the Fatherhood of God with its corollary that all men are brethren. It is from this doctrine that the Reform movements draw their strength. In the sight of the old interpretation of the Hindu gods all men were not equal. It has needed the presence of Christianity to establish the doctrine of the equality of man, and much good has flowed forth from this source.

There is a great tendency to ascribe personality to the spirit behind all things and to unify the Hindu Pantheon. I think it is Professor Gilbert Murray who points out that when the Greek gods were brought together it was fatal to them. It may come thus in India. I am aware that this idea of the personal spirit behind all things is nothing new to Hinduism, which has some very noble religious conceptions in the Vedas, but I am also aware of the practices and beliefs of the villagers, which often are very far from being high and lofty.

The Saiva and Vishnava sects of Hinduism

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claim the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man as Hindu doctrines, and yet hold hard by the Hindu doctrine of the essential inferiority of women and the caste system with all its inequalities and its harsh treatment of outcastes. Vishnava Hinduism has a Trinity closely corresponding to that of the Christian religion, the Supreme Being, His incarnation and His sakti or energizing power. The nature of this Supreme Being is what determines the quality of the religion. The Fatherhood of God contains the love of God, and this has deeply influenced most of the reforming movements in India. Increased emphasis has been laid on Bhakti.

As religion reaches a certain stage of Monotheism Bhakti must appear. What we are to understand by Bhakti depends upon the nature of the Divine Being. The more concrete and human the Supreme Being may be, then the more active will Bhakti be. It will appear as love if the deity worshipped is a god of love ; it will appear as fear if the object worshipped is a god of gloomy terror. Christian influence has somewhat changed the nature of the Divine Being of the Hindu worship, and also the nature of Bhakti, till some Christian evangelists would translate Bhakti by the word "love," and they speak of Christian Bhakti. Others translate it in the sense of faith. Both are possible, but I should think doubtful; for the trans-



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lation depends on the nature of the deity; and if you translate as love you may thus be presupposing that which is not really present. "Devotion" might be a better term by which to translate Bhakti, for it is a non-committal word, and the meaning then would depend entirely upon the object of the devotion; as the Divine Being is given or represented under the most definite form, and is conceived with attributes the most personal, so the Bhakti will change. "The ignorant think that salvation and love are different—none see that they are one. If all men knew that salvation and love were one they would live towards each other in peace, regarding love as salvation itself."

It is in thus modifying the Hindu conception of God that one of the most far-reaching indirect effects of Christian Missions in India will be found.

Take Krishna. It needs neither much nor wide acquaintance with Hinduism to realise how closely he resembles Jesus. His birth story has obvious similarity. Before he is born his mother runs away from his father and he is born in a cowshed surrounded by oxen and sheep and cowherds. We now see pictures of the mother sleeping peacefully and holding the suckling child to her bosom with herdsmen and maidens round about her, an ox and an ass at her side and the redemption-bringing star in the heavens. The picture might well be that of the Madonna. Yet originally the Krishna

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incarnation of Vishna was as a war-god, a warrior god, a hero ; it was his nature to slay giants and dragons—he was the god of the tribe. But there came a change, and now Krishna is a pastoral and idyllic deity—an infant who grows to be a boy and a youth and is throughout a god of love. When the change took place we do not know, except that it was after the fifth century. Krishna now has the same kind of attraction for the Hindu that Jesus has for the Christian. Jesus occupies almost the same place in our thoughts as Krishna in the mind of the Hindu.

While the doctrine has been thus modified the worship also has undergone change, principally by absorbing the congregational elements of Christian worship. Hinduism had nothing resembling our weekly services of worship in which the whole of the congregation takes a part. The ordinary Hindu can take no part in the pujas by which the gods are approached. Worship is confined to vicarious offerings and mantrams uttered by the priest. The latter is sole celebrant and the worshipper stands apart. During the last half-century there has grown up and multiplied a religious institution called Hari Sabhas. These are now common in the towns and villages of Bengal and are a potent influence in reviving and invigorating the faith of the people. They are Vishnava in conception—their object being spiritual develop-

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ment by means of Bhakti or devotion to Krishna or Hari. It is recognized that "inan," or salvation by knowledge, is an abstruse subject, the object of which is beyond the capacity of the ordinary man. Bhakti is, therefore, adapted as the easiest and surest means of salvation. The Sabhas assemble once a week either in a building erected as their meeting-place or at the house of one of the members. "A pundit is engaged to read and explain the text of the *Srimat Bhagbat* and other *Puranas*, while a *Kirtan* party is engaged for chanting the name of Hari and singing songs about the life of Krishna and Gauranga."<sup>1</sup> One result of this is that the common priest is beginning to supplant the family priest.

The Hari Sabha marks the introduction of a new leaven into Hinduism. The festivals are kept and puja offered, but these are supplemented by regular religious and moral lectures. The meeting-house not being a temple, all may gather there and join in the devotional exercises. Worship is in fact congregational—and this is an idea quite alien to Brahmanism. The conception of a Divine personality is brought home to the people by sacred books and by the devotional songs of praise.

Further developments of this congregational element will fall to be noticed when we come to deal with the establishment of the various Samajes.

Hinduism is not a missionary religion, and is not

<sup>1</sup> Census of India Report, 1911, Vol. V., Part I., p. 238.

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supposed to engage in any proselytizing work. For a considerable time the only way to become a Hindu was to be born one, but contact with Christianity has modified this aspect. Hinduism has had to consider the position of those who voluntarily or under compulsion had thrown off the yoke of Hinduism and embraced a faith based on a totally different set of doctrines. A modern movement called Shuddhi has grown up, or perhaps been forced upon them. It is a Sanscrit word meaning purification. In religious terminology it is now applied (1) to conversions to Hinduism of persons belonging to foreign religions, (2) to re-conversion of those who have recently or at a remote period adopted one of the foreign religions and (3) to reclamations—i.e., raising the status of the so-called depressed classes.

“ This modern movement is due to the fear that Hindu society will disintegrate under the foreign onslaught if no effort is made and no provision established for the re-instatement of converts or the elevation of the depressed classes. It is not a movement to bring people by degrees under the influence of Hinduism; but it is actual and definite conversion. There is a Shuddhi Sabha which consists largely of members of the Arya Samaj, and their efforts are directed more particularly towards the raising of the status of the depressed classes; but re-conversions of recent converts from Hinduism to

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Islam or to Christianity are not rare. Such re-converts are gradually absorbed by the Hindu community without much ceremony beyond the necessary purification ceremony. The orthodox Hindu as a rule assumes the attitude of toleration towards the purified or reclaimed people, and allows them to step into the Hindu fold without any protest. The conservatives of the old school have protested on occasion, but usually in the end have accepted the new situation."

Christianity is oldest and strongest in the south, and especially in the south-west—Malabar, Cochin and Travancore. To the depressed peoples Christianity offers a new life and a new hope. They have accepted the offer and this has raised new problems for Hinduism, which by force of circumstances has almost been driven to change from a non-missionary religion to a missionary religion. And the missionary movement in modern Hinduism also is strongest in the south. The persons raised in status or converted are admitted to terms of equality in matters of inter-dining by the members of the Arya Samaj and by the majority of the educated Hindus. The attitude of the mass of the Hindu community is one of doubtful indifference, mixed with some regret that to preserve themselves such a step should be necessary. Hinduism cannot yet be classed as a definitely missionary religion, but the old exclusiveness is breaking down.

## CHAPTER IV

### SAMAJ MOVEMENTS

WE come now to recount the founding and the growth of three of the more important Samaj movements. Of all the religious movements in India of the nineteenth century the most important and most influential was the founding of the Brahma Samaj.

The founder was Ram Mohan Ray (1772-1833). In a letter to a friend he says, "My view of Christianity is that in representing all mankind as the children of one eternal father it enjoins them to love one another without making any distinction of country, caste, colour or creed." It is said that one day, being shown a picture of Jesus Christ, he remarked that the painter had represented Him falsely, for he had given Him a European countenance, forgetting that Jesus Christ was an Oriental, and that in keeping with the Eastern origin of Christianity the Christian scriptures glow throughout with rich oriental colouring. On another occasion he said: "The consequence of my long and uninterrupted researches into religious truth has been that I have found the doctrines of Christ more conducive to moral principles and better adapted for the use of rational

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beings than any other which have come to my knowledge.”<sup>1</sup>

Coming of a deeply religious family, he early gave his study to religions and came under the influence of the group of Christian missionaries at Serampore. In 1828 he founded the Brahma Samaj; and the Trust Deed of the building dedicated to the use of the Society contains the following interesting provisions :

“ The building was intended to be a place of public meeting for all sorts and descriptions of people, without distinction, who shall behave and conduct themselves in an orderly, sober, religious and devout manner for the worship and adoration of the eternal, unsearchable, and immutable Being who is the author and preserver of the universe, but not under and by any other name, designation or title peculiarly used for and applied to any particular being or beings by any man or set of men whatsoever; and that no graven image, statue or sculpture, carving, painting, picture, portrait or the likeness of anything shall be admitted within the said messuages, building, land, tenements, hereditament and premises; and that no sacrifice, offering, or oblation of any kind or thing shall ever be permitted therein; and that no animal or living creature shall within or on the said message, etc.,

<sup>1</sup> Quoted by J. N. Farquhar, *Modern Religious Movements in India*, p. 32.

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be deprived of life for religious purposes or food, and that no eating or drinking (except such as shall be necessary by any accident for the preservation of life), feasting or rioting be permitted therein; and that in conducting the said worship or adoration no object animate or inanimate that has been, is or shall hereafter become or be recognized as an object of worship by any man or set of men shall be reviled or contemptuously spoken of or alluded to either in preaching or in hymns or other modes of worship that may be delivered or used in the said message or building ; and that no sermon, preaching, discourse, prayer or hymns be delivered, made, or used in such worship, but such as have a tendency to the contemplation of the Author and Preserver of the universe as to the promotion of charity, morality, piety, benevolence, virtue, and the strengthening of the bonds of union between men of all religious persuasions and creeds."

The movement thus begun has split into various sects and parties, but into the history of this we are not called upon to enter here as they do not concern our subject.

The creed of the Samaj includes, *inter alia*, the following :

The book of nature and intuition supplies the basis of religious faith.

They accept with pleasure and respect the truth contained in all books of religion.



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They believe in the existence of one Supreme God—a God endowed with a distinct personality, moral attributes worthy of His nature, and an intelligence befitting the Governor of the universe; and they worship Him alone. They do not believe in any of His incarnations.

They believe in the immortality and progressive state of the soul, and declare that there is a state of conscious existence succeeding life in this world and supplementary to it as regards the action of the universal moral government.

They believe that repentance is the only way to salvation. They do not recognize any other mode of reconciliation to the offended but loving father.

They pray for spiritual welfare and believe in the efficacy of such prayer.

They believe in the Providential welfare of the Divine Father.

They avow that love towards Him and the performance of the works which He loves constitute His worship.

They recognize the necessity for public worship, but do not believe that communion with the Father depends upon it. They believe that they can adore and worship Him at any time and place.

They do not believe in pilgrimages, rites or ceremonies.

They say “ Govern and regulate your feelings, discharge your duties to God and to man, and you

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will gain everlasting happiness ; purify your heart, cultivate devotional feelings, and you will see Him who is unseen."

The Christian elements in this statement of faith are so obvious that they need hardly be pointed out. It is made a cause for complaint by some Indian writers that "preachers and writers in the Brahma Samaj show a better appreciation of and interest in the Christian than the Hindu scriptures." The Fatherhood of God is predominant, and the last statement in the creed is almost a paraphrase of "the pure in heart shall see God."

There is no distinction of caste among the Brahmas. They declare that we are all children of one God and therefore must consider ourselves as brothers and sisters. They hold that God rewards virtue and punishes sin, but that His punishments are remedial and not eternal. Ram Mohan did not believe in transmigration of the soul, was against polygamy and early marriage, and in favour of the remarriage of Hindu widows. The ethics of the Brahma Samaj are Christian.

The Samaj holds weekly services for worship in which Scripture is read, sermons are preached, hymns are sung and prayer is made. This weekly congregational worship now first introduced into Hinduism was obviously inspired by Christianity.

The Christian Church is itself indebted to the movement, for it has prepared the Hindu mind for serious

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and definite Monotheism, and it has drawn many whose ultimate resting place has been Christianity.

The movement has never drawn large numbers to itself. It is not more than 7,000 strong. But owing to the social standing, literary ability and philanthropic zeal of its members it has exerted an influence in India out of all proportion to its actual numbers. Much of its teaching has been absorbed by the popular religion and its Theism has had its influence on the faith of the people till the position of the Brahma Samaj no longer appears as exalted as it once did. People now feel that they can reform Hinduism from within. The Brahma Samaj started as a Protestant movement in Hinduism, and as such it has fulfilled its purpose. Its social programme has been appropriated by Social Reformers and nationalists. Its religious programme, in part at least, has been caught up by Hindu reformers like Swami Vivekananda, and presented in the form of what he often spoke of as "dynamic Hinduism."

In 1867 the Prarthana Samaj was founded in Bombay. It is a Theistic Society whose Theism rests largely on Hindu thought, though practically they have given up the inspiration of the Vedas and the doctrine of transmigration. They are Theists and opposed to idolatry. They draw their inspiration very largely from the Hindu scriptures,

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and use the hymns of the Maratha poet saints in their services. Social reform holds the first place in their programme—the abolition of caste, the introduction of widow remarriage, the encouragement of female education and the abolition of child-marriage. Their creed defines God as the creator of the universe; eternal, spiritual, infinite, almighty, merciful, all-holy, and the Saviour of sinners. Love and reverence for Him, an exclusive faith in Him, praying and singing to Him spiritually with these feelings, and doing the things pleasing to Him, constitute His true worship. God does not incarnate Himself, and there is no one book which has been directly revealed by God or is wholly infallible. All men are His children, therefore they should behave towards each other as brethren without distinction. This is pleasing to God and constitutes man's duty. To worship and pray to images and other created objects is not a true mode of divine adoration.

This Samaj has never had the influence of the Brahma Samaj, but it has done noble service in organizing the Social Reform movement; and, while not directly connected with the Samaj, the Depressed Classes' Mission has drawn its leaders and much of its support from among the members of the Prarthana Samaj. So is the Christian attitude and the Christian teaching of the brotherhood of man spreading; and the truth of Christ, as shown

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in loving service of the downtrodden, is expressing itself in such movements.

The Arya Samaj was founded in 1875 and has expanded rapidly in the Punjab and the United Provinces. It is a Theistic Society, rejecting Pantheism and some of the doctrines included therein, such as illusion and absorption. It rejects idolatry and holds to a doctrine of the eternal identity of the soul. It holds a belief in prayer and congregational worship. But its greatest work has been in social reform, in fostering education and temperance, opposing child-marriage, and in opposing (with certain reservations) caste divisions. It is a social and political movement rather than religious. It has no priesthood, and has a somewhat Puritan form of worship except that the use of incense is permitted.

The primary object of the Samaj is to do good to the world by improving the physical, spiritual and social conditions of mankind. It demands that all men be treated with love, justice, and due regard to their merits. It works in the educational field in order that ignorance be dispelled and knowledge be diffused. It holds that no one ought to be content with his own good alone, but everyone ought to regard his prosperity as included in that of others.

The emphasis which the Samaj lays on education

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is certainly culled from the experience of Christian Missions, and it is doing a great deal for education.

The Samaj has nearly half a million adherents, and its members subscribe generously to its funds. It has done great social work, but it is doubtful whether religiously it has a great future before it.

These Samaj movements are to Hinduism what Liberal Judaism is to Judaism and Unitarianism is to Christianity. All are reforming movements attempting to dispense with any and all mediaries between God and man—be it the Torah, an Incarnation, or a body of sacred writing. But none of these movements can hope for ultimate success, for above all things man needs some bridge over the chasm which separates the finite from the Infinite.

The Christian conception of religion as bearing fruit in conduct and in the ideal character directed to service of others, has had great influence in India. India is accepting this ideal and is trying to transform its religion into a sanction of conduct and the interpretation of conduct as loving service. Out of this have grown great social movements like the work of Swami Vivekananda and the Ramakrishna Mission with its schools, orphanages, industrial schools, widows' homes and railway station help. To some extent the idea of release has been superseded by the idea of help.

But a problem arises in that many accept the

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Christian ethic and attempt to graft it on to the Hindu religion, and this is impossible. In India the modification of the ethic has been realized at a greater pace than the modification of the religion. In the gospel story the ethic is never divorced from the religion, but in India in modern times it has been so divorced. The acceptance of the Christian ethic as being the highest is quite general among the educated classes. It finds its place in all programmes of social reform. It is accepted by many as the standard rule of conduct. The question arises, can the Christian ethic support itself apart from the Christian religion with which it is bound, and out of which historically it has expressed itself? It is doubtful whether it can do so. Men who are Hindu in religion cannot be Christian in practice.

I have before me two addresses on this subject, one by Dr. H. Hensley Henson, Bishop of Durham, and one by Lord Hugh Cecil. Both emphatically agree on this point. The Bishop of Durham, in closing his address, says, "You will, of course, notice that I am making throughout the whole of my sermon the assumption of the text, namely, that there is no substitute for Christ's religion. Effective moral training is, to my mind, inconceivable apart from religious teaching. In none other is there salvation." Lord Hugh Cecil is even more emphatic, and what he says is so *apropos* that I quote at length. In his address, given in

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St. Martin's Church, London, on February 19th, 1926, he says, "There is a certain conception, which it is really hardly an exaggeration to call a virtuous paganism, set up in place of the Christian religion. I saw an interesting article, written by a distinguished headmaster of a public school, which purported to be the creed of a public schoolman. It was a certain standard of conduct, of honour, truthfulness, manly keenness of living, and the like, such as might be and has been practised by virtuous pagans, though paganism seldom succeeded in producing the type of character it aimed at. The philosopher Seneca might have given such teaching ; perhaps he did give it. That is not Christian religious education at all—merely to teach people to be honourable, to 'play the game,' to be clean living in the broad sense of avoiding anything disgusting and hateful. That sort of mediocre standard of conduct is by no means what the Christian professes. The great virtues of faith, hope and charity, even in the matter of conduct, are of the very essence of our religion, and beyond conduct we know that, as a matter of fact, the pagan conception of virtue breaks down. Ancient Rome and Greece, whatever their theoretic standards of conduct, soon failed to attain to them, and the result was as bad from the point of view of morals, and as utterly destructive, for they died of moral decay. We cannot be satisfied with



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that. We must have initiation into the membership of our religion. Nothing that does not train people to be and feel themselves to be members of the body of Christ is worth our having."

The educational activity of the Christian Missions is one factor that has led to this wide diffusion of the Christian ethic. In elementary schools, high schools and colleges for both girls and boys, the Christian message has been proclaimed at the appointed hour. I fear that often this Christian gospel has degenerated into a moral discourse. Yet, with Christian educational institutions occupying the high place which they do occupy, many of the best minds in India have been trained there. They have come under the Christian influence, but it has been largely a moral influence and not a religious influence.

The question arises—now that the ethic is broadly accepted, will it mean that the religion for which it stands will be accepted also? Historically, has ever a people come to the religion by way of the ethic? In India will it come this way or on the contrary will men turn round and tell us that the ethic is an impossible one and leave it in disappointment and disgust? We who profess and call ourselves Christian find the ethic sufficiently difficult even when we have the support and the strength which we derive from the Christian religion. Deprived of this strength and without this help how much more difficult the life must be! Is it not quite impossible?

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Men who believe in karma and in transmigration feel that caste is wrong and that the treatment of the outcaste has been cruel and harsh. They acknowledge that the abhorred untouchables are brothers, and first acknowledging this they then proceed more slowly and reluctantly to receive them as such. But if the doctrines of karma and of transmigration are to be taken seriously, it is very doubtful whether a man should attempt to interfere with the natural working of these doctrines. If the outcaste is such because of his sins in this life or in past lives, and if God is of such a nature as to decree this kind of repayment for transgression, should one interfere? If the depressed classes are to be a concern for the caste people and their status raised and hardships alleviated, it would seem that the doctrines of karma and of transmigration must be modified. If these doctrines are held there seems to be no *raison d'être* for social work, and if social work appeals to the conscience and demands to be done, then these doctrines must be modified; and to do this will also involve modification of the doctrines of sin, punishment, and the soul, and even the doctrine of God. Indeed the only doctrine that will bear the weight of all this splendid social effort is the Christian doctrine that God is the Father of all mankind and a God of love; that all men are brethren and the care of one is the care of all; that morality can be summed up in the one word "brotherliness."

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Transmigration and Karma declare that each individual passes through many lives and deaths, and also that a man's place in society is an infallible index of the stage of soul-progress that he has reached; that the suffering he bears is a retribution for past sins; that a woman is born such because of former sins, and widows are widowed because of the same reason. Since the exact amount of suffering and misery which an individual is to enjoy is fixed by his Karma, as also is the amount of happiness he is to enjoy, it is quite useless to seek to ameliorate the lot of the individual or tribe. Caste fits such a society admirably, for social grades are divinely proportioned to human deservings. This all involves a doctrine of God who stands apart from Karma and is actionless.

It would seem to be quite impossible that social service should be conceived at all when such a belief is held, for in trying to raise the depressed is it not defeating the exactly proportioned working of Karma ? The two things are incompatible, and it would almost seem that if social service is to prosper then the doctrine of God and of His means of working must be modified. It is interesting as well as informative to notice that the parties most zealous for and most prominent in social reform have so modified their beliefs in God and in Karma, the Brahma Samaj, the Prarthana Samaj and the Arya Samaj.

## CHAPTER V

### INDIAN CHRISTIAN PROBLEMS

THE substance of Christianity must be expressed in an Indian form. Dr. Heiler lays great emphasis on this, and I cannot do better than translate from his book, *Sadhu Sundar Singh*.<sup>1</sup> He says : " To a lasting conquest of the spiritual world (Geisteswelt) of India is needed, not only the simple Gospel preaching in word and life (though this always must remain the foremost and the most important), but also a gigantic theological work, which connects the fulness of the Christian revelation with the religious and philosophical property of India, as the Alexandrines and the Cappodocians, Augustine and Thomas of Animo have connected it with Greek and Latin Philosophy. This theological synthesis is even more important for India, but at the same time also more difficult, than for the West, because the religious and philosophical treasures of India are much older and richer than those of Greece. Without this theological synthesis, it will never be possible for Christianity to be the same for India, as it once became for the Greek-Roman world. Indian Christianity cannot do without such a theological leader. Such a man has up till

<sup>1</sup> Since published in an English translation.

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now not been given to India. But it is of the greatest importance that there is already among Indian Christians a demand for such a work to be done, and that groping attempts have already been made."

As an Indian says, "Our fathers are not, though we do not disclaim them, Athanasius and Augustine, Luther and Wesley, Chrysostom and Calvin, but Byasa and Vasishta, Kabir and Kamban, Manicavasagar and Markandeyan. Holy Writ says, 'we have heard with our ears and our fathers have told us, Lord, what thou didst do in their days.' Shall it be said that the same Lord is not with us, their children, now in these days?"<sup>1</sup>

Most people would admit the existence of a difference between the Christianity of the New Testament and that of, say, England to-day. Even within the covers of the New Testament there are differences—the Gospels differ from the Epistles—even the Gospels themselves present different aspects of the life of our Lord. The Marcan figure differs from the Johannine—at least in emphasis. Then the Pauline message is different from that in, say, the Johannine Epistles, and both from that of the Epistle of James. These differences are so marked that we have come to speak of a Pauline type of Christianity and a Johannine type. As Christianity went out into the world it took to itself national, racial and cul-

<sup>1</sup> *National Missionary Intelligencer*, April, 1926, p. 80.

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tural modes of expression, and without these it has existed nowhere. There were then the Judaistic type of Christianity and the Hellenic type existing in the ancient world alongside each other. As it moves into the Roman world it takes on a slightly different complexion, and as it gets further west other differences appear. It would appear that the central message of the Gospel of Jesus Christ is capable of different expressions, and each people or culture to whom or to which it is presented develops the core in its own way. It is like the same seed grown in different soils in different climates—the resulting tree is fundamentally the same tree, but it has differences. So the English character, the English history, the English culture have influenced Christianity in that land and produced something beautiful and noble, yet with many features not fundamental to Christianity itself. Now if Christianity is to succeed in an environment so totally different as is India it must be expected to express itself in slightly other form—and it must be allowed to do this. Up to the present I complain that this has not been allowed; and a Christian convert of say one of the great Anglican Missionary Societies has had to go through exactly the same confession of faith as his brother in England, and the Church services in both countries have been kept identical, as far as that was possible.

I take it that the four important elements in the

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Oriental religious consciousness are (i) The contemplative life, (ii) The sense of the presence of the Unseen, (iii) Aspiration towards ultimate Being, (iv) Reverence for sanctions of the past. Merely to enumerate them is itself to draw attention to the difference. The contemplative life esteems thought to be above action—the West reverses the valuation. The sense of the presence of the Unseen goes with a belief that matter is unreal and is an evil to be got rid of, if the soul is to realize itself. Out of this grow ideas of renunciation and of asceticism. Their idea of a religious worker or rather a religious man is the wandering Sanyasi, who is celibate, who owns nothing in this world, and who throws himself on the charity of others.

One bogey that has been tracking Indian Christianity for the last two centuries has been the fear of idolatry. We allow figures of Jesus Christ and His apostles in stained glass windows and sometimes, though less often, in pictures—all in two dimensions; but when it is suggested to put up a figure in three dimensions we are warned of idolatry, and it is forbidden in some of the Reformed branches of the Church. Idolatry is not universal in Hinduism. Many think of the incense, candles, conches, paintings, music, sculpture, flowers and leaves used in worship as being signs or forms of idolatry, but are they so? Hinduism uses a great many of these aids to worship, as does also the Christian

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Church in some of its branches. Recall all the ritualistic wealth of the Syrian Church in South India, and the colours and magnificent forms of Roman and Greek Catholic worship. Even the Anglican Church allows some of these things. Is music "auditory" idolatry, and are paintings "visual" idolatry? An orthodox Mohammedan would say they were; an orthodox Christian probably deny it. The Indian mind is alert enough to distinguish here the form from the essence—the aid from the object of worship—as we all can. And further, if Christians are allowed and even encouraged to form images of Christ in their own minds, why not have them in three-dimensional space? An Indian pastor once told me that when he prayed he could nearly always visualize Jesus standing at his side. If this was a good Christian attitude, I see little difference between this and a figure in stone of the Master as He is traditionally featured.

But does Indian in this connection mean only Hindu? About one-fourth of the population are Mohammedans, and we cannot neglect them. At the same time it is to be remembered that Hinduism is the faith of India, and has been influencing the life and thought of the people for generations. It has given her people a certain peculiar religious characteristic and attitude which



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no one coming to India can escape or neglect. As we have already pointed out, even such an uncompromising monotheistic religion as Islam has in India been influenced by Hindu thought, as in turn Hindu thought has been influenced by Islam.

Then what are the more important features of the Indian religious atmosphere which Christianity ought to encourage ?

Toleration—religious toleration is needed. Unfortunately, with some 160 different Christian denominations and sects working in India at the present time this is an aspect needing emphasis. Of these numerous denominations it is the smaller and more modern ones that require to learn this lesson. There are some few that go about the country with wandering commissions feeling that they and they alone own the seal which is to frank the passports for heaven. They cause much annoyance to their brethren and set up independent and exclusive churches. India has a great sense that truth is many-sided, and that no one religion or sect can claim to have apprehended the whole truth. This accounts for the fact that there has been little or no religious persecution in India as compared with Western countries. The recent Hindu-Muslim quarrels are not religious persecution, they are communal quarrels.

The Christian Church should encourage intercourse with its neighbours be they Hindu or

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Mohammedan. Why should not a good, saintly Hindu guru occasionally be invited to speak in a Christian church? In the West, we have Jewish rabbis speaking to Christian congregations. And in questions of social reform should we not join forces with our brethren, be they of any creed or no creed, so long as they are inspired with a social consciousness and like ideals for society as ourselves?

It is a question, and an interesting one, to discuss—What influence will Hinduism have on Christianity in India? Time alone can give the answer, but certain features are worth recording, and certain possibilities are worth stating.

The absence of first-rate Christian theological schools in India has been a serious handicap in the expression of Christianity in this country. India has many religious terms and phrases of deep meaning and ancient heritage, which could contribute much to a fuller presentation of our faith to Indians. Indian Christianity needs a terminology of its own which will at once appeal to the Indian heart and at the same time retain its own peculiar characteristics. In this terminology it will retain many of the ancient Indian religious words, and it will throw out many of the pagan Greek terms, which have come to us by way of the creeds. It will be careful to guard against any possible misunderstandings by adopting and baptizing into the

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Christian faith not all the Hindu philosophical terms, yet it can accept some with advantage.

One result is sure—the Indian will agree with St. Paul that the seen is temporal and the unseen is eternal. There will be an emphasis on the eternal and an ignoring of the temporal. The reality behind all phenomena will be stressed—and not its appearances. In the development of Indian Christianity this stressing of the reality behind all phenomena, the supreme value of the eternal, would be a good corrective against the “materialistic utilitarian standards of the West.” The Indian better than the Westerner can understand the text, “What shall a man give in exchange for his soul?” In the West I fear many men would sell their souls at a low price!

The idea of the immanence of God as understood and developed in Indian religious thought is already beginning to influence Western philosophy. Christian thinkers who essay to re-interpret in Indian categories of thought the verities of the Christian experience cannot afford to neglect this truth and its historical development in India.

The Indian would provide a good corrective against the tendency to Deism in the West. “The Kingdom of God is within you” is a text easily understood by him. He sees God everywhere and has a longing for universal harmony. This will give a sensitive regard for all life, and while holding up the superiority of man will tend to

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bridge the enormous gulf which the West has created between man and the lower creation—even to plants.<sup>1</sup> A new feeling of the unity of all life will then arise and a new sense of community in the world. All this would bring back to us the sense of the immanence of God as well as His transcendence.

It is surely doubtful whether the Indian bows down to idols of wood and stone as some of our hymns tell us. The Indian mind is quite capable of drawing the difference here. A friend of mine who is a Commissioner in Assam was once touring in the hill country in the north of that territory. One day he met a savage hillman appropriately garbed for a savage—dressed largely in leaves. Round his waist were suspended a number of pieces of wood carved in semi-human form. My friend, wishing to be cordial, and to start a conversation, said to him, "Be these your gods?" To this the savage indignantly replied, "How can these be images of God? Has any man seen God at any time?" I am assured that this tribe had had no contact with Westerners or with Christianity.

Then, too, there is a very strong suspicion in some Indian minds that Christianity works by a system of rewards and punishments which are not exactly proportional to the deeds. Now Hinduism also works with rewards and punishments in its

<sup>1</sup> Consider the work of Sir Jagadis Bose. Only an Indian could do that.



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doctrine of Karma, but here the “punishment fits the crime.” They tell us that for a short measure of goodness—the good deeds in this life—Christianity offers a disproportionate reward—eternal bliss. And for a relatively short measure of evil in this life it offers a disproportionate penalty—eternal punishment. Doubtless this argument is based on a theology which is passing out of fashion in the West, but it is still all too common in India. It is not very closely allied to the Gospel story, nor is it very easily reconciled with a God of love. And so far they are right in pointing out this danger. But Christianity should correct this, and the Indian mind will help us to do so.

The doctrines of the “Incarnation” and the “Atonement” badly need re-statement for India. They are central to the Christian message—but after all are they firmly held or clearly understood in the West? Considering the amount of literature that is poured out annually on these subjects in the West one suspects that they still form a good debating ground. India may approach these doctrines starting from the widespread oriental belief in Karma. That evil must of necessity be expiated, that demerit cannot be expiated by merit alone apart from divine grace, and that a man cannot escape the consequences of his sin—these are points in Karma which might profitably be used as a starting point in an effort at an interpretation

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of the Atonement which would be understood by India.

I am not forgetting Anselm's "Cur Deus Homo?"

The widely prevalent belief in Ahimsa, not as mere non-violence, but as a positive concept of active love, capable of infinite suffering for the good of others, is another element which may be utilized for understanding and interpreting the vicarious suffering of Jesus Christ.

"It is consonant with the spirit of the Gospel that Western missionary methods should divest themselves of that bitterness and antipathy towards the spiritual heritage of a land which is truly the mother of religions. It is not, however, by an academic appreciation of the beauty and the grandeur of the great religious epics of India, nor in a negative toleration of the tenets of the *Bhagavatgeeta*, nor yet in a supercilious attitude of patronage and sufferance towards Buddhism or Islam, that the Indian Christian *Bhakta* will enter into what St. Paul designates 'the fellowship of the mystery which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God—according to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord' (Eph. iii. 9-11).

"This is the Quest of the Bharath Christya Sevak Samaj. It commences with a recognition of the inclusion of this great land and its peoples in this eternal purpose of God. We admit the individualistic character of Christian faith and

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experience. Dare we deny it to the race? The curtailment of God's eternal purpose for man in Christ is the expression of human selfishness and arrogance, and man thereby stultifies the Eternal. Christ came to fulfil the Law. It is for the Indian Christian to discover in Christ the fulfilment of the Law of God as known to India. He must be the Wise Man of the East, who shall re-discover on the spiritual firmament of Hindustan the star of the nativity of Jesus, Who is the King of the Indian peoples. He must re-learn the spiritual terminology of his race in order to make the declaration of his homage to his King clear and unequivocal to his own people.

“ The failure of the present missionary challenge to the soul of India compels us to the conclusion that there must be something fundamentally wrong in our presentation and interpretation of the appeal of Christ to Indian humanity; and the conviction grows on me, that not until the Indian Christian *Bhakta* discovers in the scriptures of his own land the Old Testament of his faith shall he realize the full meaning of Jesus in his own soul-life and that of his countrymen. Towards this end must earnest men engage themselves in the study of the Truth as God revealed it to His Indian sons and for the fulfilment of which this land has yearned and waited through the ages and still waits and hungers and thirsts. It is necessary also that all our actions

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should conform to our aim, and the outward indications of our desire will naturally find expression in our modes of worship and devotion. For he who seeks *Siddhi* must regulate his *Sadhana*. It cannot be denied that the present mode of Christian worship is a foreign graft which has been fruitful in alienating the Indian Christian community from their brethren. Homeward must the Indian Christian worshipper wend his way, and in his secret devotion and public worship exercise that *Bhakti* which will influence his inner spiritual attitude.”<sup>1</sup>

“Give India the cotton she needs and let her spin with it the *sarees* to suit her fancies, and not force on her your narrow skirts and tight corsets of the Western World. Give India the pure gold and let her with it make a crown to fit her head.”<sup>2</sup>

I beg leave to print entire and without comment the following article contributed to *The National Missionary Intelligencer*,<sup>3</sup> for March, 1926 :

### THE HOLY COMMUNION SERVICE IN HINDU TEMPLES.

By Paul S. Kadambavanam.

“My revered Father was a pious Hindu. He taught me no religion in the sense we teach Bible to our children, but his piety and religious and

<sup>1</sup> *National Missionary Intelligencer*, February, 1926, pp. 32-3.

<sup>2</sup> *National Missionary Intelligencer*, January, 1926, p. 9.

<sup>3</sup> I am grateful to the Editor for according me permission.

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domestic life in general moulded my religious life in the early days of my life. As a man who never heard of Jesus Christ he died 25 years ago, and still in some respects he is my ideal and I try to follow him.

“He would never have his dinner without worshipping God Siva in the temple every night. Nothing as far as I know (except serious illness) could prevent him from going to the temple daily. If he could not go and worship Siva in the temple one night he would forgo his dinner. When I was young I used to follow him to the temple sometimes.

“In every Hindu temple daily there is an evening service, தீப ஆராதனை by name (colloquially called தீவார்தனை), which is usually held between 6 and 8 p.m. During this service the chief stone idol (மூலஸ்தானம் as it is called) is dressed with jewels, gold plates, silks and flowers, and hundreds of devotees assemble there to have a glimpse of Siva during the service. The big drums are beaten, musical instruments are played, cornets are blown, the big bell is rung and sacred verses from the Vedas are sung like Choral services of the Christian Churches. Towards the close of the service *Prasadam* (solid eatables offered to the Deity) and *Theertham* (the Holy Water) are freely distributed to the devotees. The worshippers receive a pinch or a small quantity of prasadam and eat it with due respect. Then follows the distribution of the Holy Water. As

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they stand bowing their heads, about a teaspoonful (உத்திரணி) of the Holy Water is poured in the hollow of the right palm of everyone present, who supports his right palm with his left one underneath it and a portion of his cloth between thereto,<sup>1</sup> thus preventing even a drop of this Holy Water from falling to the ground. Then the devotee, lifting his head up, pours and reverently takes in half the quantity of this blessed water, and sprinkles the remaining half on his head and returns home rejoicing. It is considered unholy to lick or to sip the water from the hand.

“One day on questioning my father as to the meaning of this daily ceremony he explained that one’s sins will fly away as soon as one partakes of this prasadam and water with bhakti.<sup>2</sup>

“Eight years after my father’s death I embraced the Christian Faith,<sup>3</sup> and noticed the same sort of service is being conducted in our Churches. I am not unaware of the peculiar and the sacred significance of the Communion service in our Churches, but it appears to me in a different colour. Let me make myself more clear lest I should be misunderstood. The Prasadam and the Holy Water, after the Brahmins had their turns, are distributed irre-

<sup>1</sup> *sic*; ? the two.

<sup>2</sup> I never heard of the expression “Forgiveness of Sin” as long as I was a Hindu. This is purely a Christian doctrine. My father probably meant something like the forgiveness of sin when he said this.

<sup>3</sup> The word “Faith” is thoroughly Christian. *Bhakti* is the word which Hindus often use. This word conveys the sense better than the word “Faith.”

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spective of caste or creed. It is opened to the public and is offered to any sinner. But the Communion Service in our churches, though it is preached to be the means of grace, is not opened to the public and is not offered to any sinner. There is a restriction. Only the members of that particular Church can partake of it. So it is not universal or Catholic. Any sinner with a penitent heart cannot have a claim over it even though it is specially meant for him. Did our Lord mean it in this way ?

“ Moreover, the very idea of sipping a sacred vessel and passing it on from lips to lips is a thing Hindus can never imagine. It was a Jewish habit which has automatically been Christianized in the West and transferred to the East.

“ In Hindu families the father or the head of the family is the Priest of the family. He performs all the functions of a priest on festival days. Let me quote one instance to prove how this idea develops itself naturally in Christian families. There was a great and influential man in Madras who was a pious convert from Hinduism and a true bhakta. After I became a Christian he often used to invite me to dine with him, and I used to accept the invitation as I enjoyed the real fellowship of Christianity with him whenever I paid him a visit. I was present in his house one evening during the family worship. Never will I forget it. The

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service that was so instructive and impressive lasted for about an hour. Towards the end of the service there was the Holy Communion, and my friend, the father of the family, acted as priest. He blessed the bread and the wine, and after he had taken it offered them to his wife, children, grandchildren and relations. In this article I am neither to support nor to criticize his actions. He was one of the best Christian bhaktas I have come across in my life, and was at the same time a loyal and an important member of the Church to which he belonged. How can I conscientiously believe that God would not accept this service as it was not conducted by an ordained man and in a consecrated place? I dare not say anything on it. So I simply leave the question as I do not want to discuss it. But I know that God in the great personality of Jesus has promised to be present in a place where two or three are gathered together in His name.

“I will never also forget the sad and the most unpleasant Christian experience I had in my life once. Some ten years ago I had the rare privilege of conducting a big mass meeting on a Sunday morning in a big city in S. India. Hundreds of people were present and the whole service was left in my hands. This was followed by the Holy Communion service. As I belonged to another Church I had to leave this Church and come away with a sad and heavy heart. In the sermon I spoke



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of service for our country, and union, fellowship and love for our countrymen ; but in the very next minute I found that I could not put them into practice. I had to damp the spirit of God that was moving me and was compelled to disobey 'the voice of God.' I mean the conscience that was pressing within me. I felt I was kicked out of God's presence for the simple mistake of not being a member of that Church, for which I was not, in any sense, responsible. There I realized that 'Church' stands between a sinner and God.

"Well, the reader may say that we Christians cannot compare our religious practices to those of Hindus and accept their way of worshipping God as an ideal one. I do admit that. At the same time we do not want to be narrow-minded and sectarian, and our religious worship and practices to be less dignified and useful than those of Hindus. I am a Communicant member of a Church and a humble bhakta of Jesus Christ to-day for the simple reason that I earnestly believe that Christianity is far superior to Hinduism and the life and teaching of our Divine Master Jesus Christ are unique and unrivalled. But I do feel that it would be better if we have freedom to practise what we preach and to act according to our Lord's desire without any restrictions or reserve or doctrines or denominational spirit-tight compartments."

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Within the Christian community itself there are signs that all is not too well. I can give figures only for the South India United Church, but as it is a community of nearly a quarter of a million it might be taken as representative at least of the South. It has eight Church Councils, and in 1926 their nominal strength was as follows :

1.	Travancore	-	-	-	113,750
2.	Telugu	-	-	-	35,723
3.	Madura	-	-	-	28,567
4.	Madras	-	-	-	29,217
5.	North Tamil	-	-	-	11,099
6.	Malabar	-	-	-	—
7.	Jaffna	-	-	-	3,573
8.	Kanarese	-	-	-	1,984

(Malabar made no return for 1926).

Here is an interesting table :

*Percentage of Communicants to total Christian Community.*  
1926.

1.	Jaffna	-	-	-	69 per cent.
2.	Malabar	-	-	-	—
3.	Madura	-	-	-	34½ „
4.	Madras	-	-	-	24½ „
5.	Kanarese	-	-	-	27 „
6.	Travancore	..	-	-	14 „
7.	North Tamil	-	-	-	9 „
8.	Telugu	-	-	-	7½ „

Average for the whole community, 22 per cent.

The Telugu district with a Christian community of 36,000 has among these only 7½ per cent. of communicants. Of course, this is an area which

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has seen extensive mass movements, and maybe many are still unbaptized adherents ; but even in Madras, which is an old-established community and comparatively unaffected by mass movements, the percentage of communicant Christians only goes up to something under 25 per cent. But that this explanation of the very low percentage in the Telugu area does not hold is shown by the following figures :

*Percentage of baptized to the total number of Christians.*

				1926.
1.	Jaffna	-	-	26.6 per cent.
2.	Malabar	-	-	—     "
3.	Madura	-	-	46.0     "
4.	Madras	-	-	55.1     "
5.	Kanarese	-	-	68.7     "
6.	Travancore	-	-	60.8     "
7.	North Tamil	-	-	78.4     "
8.	Telugu	-	-	68.9     "

Thus of the total baptized adherents in the Telugu council, only 11 per cent. are communicant members.

For other Christian communities I have no detailed figures at hand, but perhaps an examination of them all would reveal little that is different from the above. At any rate I know that in the Anglican Community in the South there are 91,355 communicant members and 250,461 "other Christians." This gives the communicant members as 27 per cent. of the whole. The Wesleyan Methodist

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body in the south returns 14,626 communicant members and 68,899 "other Christians." This gives a proportion of 18 per cent. Both figures seem to be comparatively low.

The most significant figure here is the very small percentage of communicant members to the total Christian population, from which one would infer that the Celebration of the Lord's Supper does not hold the place in the consciences and hearts of these Indian Christians that it does in the case of a Western Christian. Then the comparatively large number of unbaptized adherents would seem perhaps to indicate that baptism does not hold the place in their thoughts that it does in the West. Here one is not complaining. I merely cite these facts to show how in this Eastern country the Sacraments are obliged to take a lower place than they do in the West.

The Indian Churches in celebrating the Communion of the Lord's Supper universally use bread and wine. To a large number of the communicants this is the only time that they ever taste either bread or wine—neither forms part of their regular diet. In some areas there are difficulties in providing the bread and in other areas there is a repetition of the situation at Corinth, where the communion was being abused. I know at least one section of the Indian Church where the *per caput* consumption of wine at the Communion is a very high figure,

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and I know of at least one case of a communicant actually leaving the church in a state of intoxication. But so it was also at Corinth ! Now I take it that the Holy Communion, while essentially a memorial rite, also stands for the consecration of the common things of life—the bread and wine of daily food in Palestine—and that by their consecration we have communion one with the other and with Him. This is at least one element. In the West, taking these common things of life for this purpose is defensible. But in the East, where the majority of the people are quite unacquainted with either of the elements, the whole service demands careful handling. The very strangeness of the physical elements tends to encourage or at least is good virgin soil for the growth of a magical idea of the sacrament which needs to be strongly resisted.

I have already stated that most of the Christian Churches have a credal test for membership; this is a purely Western introduction. Most Churches ask questions of their candidates for membership on a similar basis to one of the great creeds of Christendom. This has always appeared to me to be a Pauline element that is not in the gospels. St. Paul says let him that is not able to say Jesus is Lord be anathema—the beginning of the credal basis. Jesus said, Love God with all your being and your neighbour as yourself—this do and thou

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shalt have eternal life. Now Hinduism has no creed—and indeed it would be a very great problem for the Hindus if they required a creed—it certainly could not be as short as our Apostles' Creed ! But they have no need for one, for their basis is not credal, but social. It is not what do you believe, it is not a definite creed, but rather conformity to certain social usages and conduct. In actual practice, conduct may not mean anything more than correct observance of caste rules, but whatever it be, the emphasis is on conduct rather than belief.

This raises important questions for the Christian Church. In a land surrounded by non-Christian forces it is necessary that the Church should have a distinctive mark to separate itself from these forces. It has usually insisted that those wishing to call themselves Christian should be publicly baptized, and at that baptism make confession of a faith usually in terms of the ancient creeds. One result of this insistence has been that converts from caste Hinduism have been called upon to suffer much for their faith. On being openly baptized their families have repudiated their relationship and refused to have any further contact with them. To their parents they are as dead and can no longer live in the home with them, nor eat together, nor have any share in the family wealth. Sometimes Hindu parents of wealth have given small allow-

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ances to sons who have confessed the Christian faith, but far more often the convert at baptism owns nothing in this world and has to face the prospect of isolation from his former home and even much persecution. This has involved the Missionary Societies in the necessity of providing Converts' Homes where such as are young in the faith can be supported and if possible taught a trade in order to make them self-supporting. Sometimes it has further driven Societies unwillingly to venture on industrial undertakings where they can give employment to such people and help them to support themselves. It has also meant serious and regrettable disruptions of families, with much bitterness and much suffering, so that Christianity among certain castes, or rather families, is looked upon with loathing. Further, it immediately withdraws the Christian influence from the family, the little leaven that leaveneth the lump. So that instead of having Christians all over the countryside the tendency has been to collect them round the house of the missionary, where they could be protected and supported. This must have been a serious handicap in the spreading of the gospel. Now what is to be done ?

At the present moment I know of two caste Hindus, young men of University education—who call themselves Christian. They have neither of them been baptized, and both live with their

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parents. They both attend church at irregular intervals, and have a good knowledge of the Christian gospel. One of them says he sees no need for baptism, which would break up his home life and be a bitter blow to his parents, to whom he owes so much and to whom he is affectionately attached. He does not go to the Temple except on very special occasions, but he does take part in the family devotions. He says when he repeats mantras about Agni he means the Holy Spirit, and of course he has no intention of idolatry. His parents know in part what he thinks and say nothing so long as he is willing to take part in the family devotions. He is a good man and leads a life that one would be justified in calling Christian. Should a Christian minister who is his friend press him to receive baptism and confess a formal creed with all its consequences to his family life? The other case is in many respects very similar, except that here the youth wants to seek baptism, which will at once cut him off completely from his family. Would it not be far better for both of them to remain unbaptized and thus be able to remain with their families and there shine forth as lights in the darkness? It is not an easy question to answer. Undoubtedly the open confession of faith has been valuable in many cases as testing the degree of Christianity of the convert and making him appreciate its importance; and the memory of that



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confession has often been helpful in strengthening the young Christian in the faith and enabling him to stand persecution and trial. But we cannot argue that baptism is necessary to salvation, nor that the mere recitation of the Apostles' Creed ever saved a soul. It is life that counts—this do and thou shalt live.

And why do so many Hindu converts when they come over to Christianity take to beef-eating, much to the annoyance and real pain of their family? There seems little or no good reason for it, yet it is fairly general. One could almost wish that the Indian Church would adopt a universal vegetarianism—I am very sure that our relations with the Hindu community would be much more cordial if we did so. It is difficult for a Westerner to appreciate or indeed to have any idea of the abhorrence which the good Hindu has for anybody who eats the flesh of the sacred cow.

At a Missionary conference held in Bangalore lately Mr. Gandhi told the missionaries that they were trying to do the right thing in the wrong way. Said he, "I want you to complement the faith of the people instead of undermining it. As the Diwan of Mysore said in his address to the Assembly, the Adi Karnatakas should be made better Hindus, as they belong to Hinduism. I would similarly say to you, make us better Hindus, i.e., better men or women. Why should a man, even if he become

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a Christian, be torn from his surroundings ? Whilst a boy I heard it being said that to become a Christian was to have a brandy bottle in one hand and beef in the other. Things are better now, but it is not unusual to find Christianity synonymous with denationalization and Europeanization. Must we give up our simplicity to become better people ? Do not lay the axe at our simplicity."

Probably by mass movements will come our greater accession to Christianity in India. But a note of warning is needed that from the beginning we do not tolerate caste within the Christian community; the danger here is that such bodies entering the Church under a common impulse at one time will endeavour to maintain themselves as a separate community within the borders of the Church. The Church must sternly set its face against any such isolation.

With such movements, and it is by no means a blind forecast—there are signs of them here and there—the Christian forces will be increased and strengthened, but it is not likely that even these will cover the whole of India's millions in the immediate future; but I have great hope in the present movement to make Christianity pass through the Indian mind. If this is successful, and I refer to it in more detail later, it would make us much more powerful, and these two factors together will enormously strengthen the influence of the Christian

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religion in India. It will be the Indian genius handling the Christian religion and thus producing a national or racial or eastern type—whichever word is preferred for the adjective. Then I see some hope of its influence on Hinduism being so great that Hinduism will Christianize itself ; it will not destroy itself, but the old will change, giving place to the new, and no one can say how beautiful a thing the new might be.

Such a movement to my mind must necessarily arise outside the organization of the foreign missionary agencies in India—for after all they are foreign in spite of all attempts to disguise the fact. What form it might take one is loth to speculate. To such a movement the better informed Missionary Societies would be among the most sympathetic observers and helpers, for then they would see some hope of Indians undertaking the task of the evangelization of their own country—an ideal which has for long been before the Missionary Societies, but has been sought to be fulfilled by inviting the co-operation of Indians with the Western Missionaries in an organization almost wholly Western or at best but slightly modified. I shall have occasion later to refer to this again, and here would merely repeat my view that our hope lies in the growth of an indigenous movement outside the trammels of our Western methods and organization.

## PART II



## CHAPTER VI

### THE MISSIONARY PROBLEM

INDIA has known Christianity for perhaps 1,500 years. The Syrian Churches have been established in Southern India—in Travancore and Cochin—for all these long centuries. In many parts of India what is now the Roman Catholic Church has been a well established feature for five centuries. The Protestant Churches have had two or more centuries of established life in well defined sections of the country. Considering the length of time, the vitality of our religion, and the quality of the Indian peoples, one would have expected Christianity to have spread over the country like a prairie fire. Instead of which—what is the picture? It seems probable that early in this millennium, Christianity was more widespread in the East than it is to-day. In Ceylon, the number of Christians belonging to all Churches and denominations combined is to-day about the same as it was a hundred years ago. In India itself, out of a total population of some three hundred and twenty millions, Christians number just over five millions. That is, after fifteen centuries of residence in this country, some one and a half per cent. of the population is Christian; in Ceylon it is ten per cent.

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It is true that in India the Christian community now seems to increase each decade by about thirty per cent., but this figure should not be taken too rapturously. The changed mode of life of the Christian will probably add to his longevity. I have no statistics, but I judge that infantile mortality is less among the Christian community than the average for all India ; and also, longevity is greater than the average. Therefore, by self-propagation and conservation, the community would tend to increase beyond that of its neighbours. But apart from this, it is significant that the increase of the Christian community is recorded largely, not in those areas where the Church has been well established for many generations, but almost entirely in those districts where missionary work is of very recent history. The statistics themselves are really very discouraging, but seldom do figures indicate the measure of our hope of the coming of the Kingdom !

According to the statistical returns, so far as the South is concerned, the districts showing the greatest increase—indeed almost the only increase—are some of the Telugu Districts and Coimbatore—just those districts where mass movements are going on at the present time. In all other Tamil districts, as also in Malabar, the figures are practically stationary. This indicates two things (1) all previous mass movements have come to a standstill, (2) the older,

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well-established congregations have not been able to carry the work further.

In Madras city Christianity is very old. It is even said that the Apostle St. Thomas was martyred near there, but whether we accept this tradition or not, Christianity in that city can claim an ancient foundation. Madras with a population of 526,000 has about 150 foreign missionaries resident and working in the city in an area of 27 square miles. Many eminent men and women have laboured there and laid down their lives for the gospel. Indian Christians too in that city have shown in their lives the virtues of Christ and of His gospel. Christian activities have been carried on with great energy and zeal. Counting the number of churches in Madras, the figure would compare not unfavourably with cities of similar size in Europe. The list of church services in Madras published in the Saturday newspapers for the forthcoming Sunday is almost as imposing as the weekly list given in the Saturday edition of *The Times*. Yet, in spite of all this, Madras does not show any increase in the number of Christians.

Tanjore District saw the beginnings of Protestant Missions in South India. Ziegenbalg landed in Tranquebar and a number of devoted German missionaries did a very noble work in those parts. The name of Schwartz of Tanjore will always stand foremost among Protestant missionaries in India.



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A numerous Christian community was the result of their work. There was progress up to a certain point—but then standstill.

Perhaps no district has been extolled so much as Tinnevely. The Tinnevely Christians are very numerous, and they are found in prominent positions all over India. The Tinnevely Christians were the first to form a Missionary Society, which is still doing a zealous work in the Nizam's dominions. I think it is quite possible to point to various causes for the lamentable fact that the Church in Tinnevely has not been able to expand in its home. It is not necessary to do this now. The fact anyhow is there. Tinnevely shows no startling increase.

It is the same in Malabar. The Christian community there seems to be content to accept the existence of great masses of non-Christians round about it as a matter of course. The Church sits down under the unevangelized multitudes and in thus trying to save its own soul it may be that it will lose it! Things in South India at least seem rapidly consolidating into this state of affairs. Of course they have the example of the Syrian Church before them. Established in India in the early centuries of our era, these Christians consolidated themselves into a separate caste or community recognized by government as a special caste with its special rights and privileges and regulations.

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Instead of being the salt of the earth and the leaven that leavens the lump they became a separate, self-contained, and self-enclosed community.

Christian missionaries are in part to blame, but not wholly. In our anxiety for the new converts, to save them from troubles and persecutions, we withdrew them from their natural surroundings and provided "Christian" colonies for them where we carefully shepherded them from all harm. The result has been that their character is weakened and the Hindu community deprived of the influence of Christian lives. But the blame is not wholly ours. These days of colonies are past—largely but not entirely—and the evil takes to itself another form. The Christians no longer wish to live in colonies, but in their villages they are fast making themselves into another of India's castes with their own political and social rights and rites ! The social conditions of the country may have something to do with producing this state of affairs. Hinduism, from which the majority of our Christians have come, knows nothing of evangelization, or until modern times of proselytism. It is an extraordinarily tolerant religion, and perhaps we owe this "caste" feature in our Indian Christianity to this. With caste all round them, what more natural than that the Christians should also regard themselves as but another caste in India's rôle ? It may not be Christian, but it is Indian. Yet, if Hinduism knows

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nothing of evangelization, it knows a good deal about religious teaching, with its ashrams, Gurus, and Sannyasi, and this element has not yet come into Christianity. Maybe that is due to the presence of the foreign missionary, who up till quite lately set his face very sternly against anything that might savour of Hindu methods !

In a country where caste is already deeply rooted, it is very easy, all too easy, for the system to pass into the Christian Church with the caste converts. Christianity knows no such division as caste creates, and should know none such. All we are brethren—and if we have caste within the Christian Church we should somehow combine Hindu with our name and call ourselves something like Neo-Hinduism !

Here is a paragraph from a newspaper report of a meeting of the Caste Catholic Association held at Trichinopoly in 1926.

“ Mr. Kolandassamy Pillai regretted that the terms of compromise entered into between the clergy and the Catholics were never put into effect, but that the clergy were still trying to mix the high with the low castes.”

This question of caste arising within the folds of the Christian Church is an indirect effect of Christian Mission work. Its value we are not called upon to assess ; there it is, and Christianity introduced by the Western Church has taken to itself some of the colour of its surroundings.

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It is a question at which we shall have to look later, but it seems almost as if we are still suffering in a measure from this early policy of isolation adopted by the foreign missionaries. By withdrawing Christians from their homes in the villages we withdrew them from contact with their own people and with the general atmosphere of life in India. It was then easier for the Christian converts to adopt European manners and customs. They generally took to themselves Western surnames and later adopted Western modes of dress.

Here we have one result of the very well-intentioned "Mission box." Most Societies have themselves so organized that each Mission field has a "patron" at home who collects clothes and toys and other oddments which are boxed up and sent out annually to the field. The clothing contained in the boxes was invariably European style of dress. It was ultimately handed over to the Christian pupils in boarding schools and Christian families attached to the Mission. Having some resemblance to that worn by the missionary, it acquired a certain added sanctity and set the fashion for the costume of the community—and most atrocious combinations were perpetrated! When the arrival of these boxes became less frequent the Christian community itself set to work to copy the fashions, and in certain districts the stiff and ugly late nineteenth century bodice and skirt became *the* thing to wear. And

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now, when we do try to encourage the Christians to keep to their very beautiful Indian costumes, we have the utmost difficulty.

Thus were set up barriers against free intercourse with their own non-Christian nationals. The result was seen some few years ago when the Indian national consciousness was intensified ; and when feeling arose against the governing power, the Indian Christians were almost invariably and without argument assumed to be on the side of the governing power. A Christian Home Ruler was thought to be a contradiction in terms ! Wrongly so, for many of them were swayed by exactly the same political emotions and hopes as rose in the breasts of their non-Christian brethren ; but the Indian mind could hardly realize this. In fact the division sometimes adopted was Indians and Christians ! This phase has passed to some extent, and Indian Christians now take their full share in politics and join political parties without suspicion. But the tendency has been to make them a separate class in the country and closely associated with Western ideals. Considering the history of Christianity in India and how it was introduced in later times at least by foreign missionaries, this was perhaps in part inevitable, but the consequences have been disastrous. It has meant that all Christian teaching and Christian institutions have received the stamp of the West. There has been no growth of an Indian interpreta-

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tion of Christianity nor an Indian expression of it. One must not forget Robert de Nobili's work in Madura, which was an attempt at an Indian expression of Christianity, but as it was based on falsehood it did not abide. Now, with India's almost passionate repudiation of all that savours of the West, the problem has changed somewhat. The emphasis is now put on the Eastern character of Christianity, which after all had its birth in Asia, and efforts are being made to feel after what is the kernel of its message, and taking that, to see how the Indian mind will express it in its own country. And who is there who will not encourage them?

Between Christians and the other religious communities there is no trace of that communal tension which exists so strongly between the Hindu and Moslem communities. But I am inclined to the view that that tension is not due to religious differences so much as to political exigencies. The Moslem is in a minority, and sees the Government positions largely occupied by Hindus ; and he is afraid he is not getting his fair share of the offices and so expresses his fear in this way. It is really political fear and not religious hatred. So far the Indian Christian has not got that large slice of the plums of office which need make his neighbours jealous of him.

Truth to tell, our greatest problem is just to decide what is the Gospel message. Our fathers in

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the cause came to India naturally dominated by the expression which Christianity has taken to itself in Western Europe with all its churches and organizations, threatening to crush out the spirit of the early gospel message. They preached and taught, and if any believed they baptized them and formed congregations. These congregations were formed into local denominational churches on Western models. The organization was western, the buildings were western, the music was western, the form of service was western. Just a copy of a village congregation in England, and like all copies, less valuable than the original, indeed bad. The local Indian clergy copy their Western gurus. They wear clerical collars, black frock coats and, were they not so expensive, would like silk hats. I have never seen them wearing these, but I daresay on special occasions they do wear them.

The Western missionary has not been able altogether to free himself from the idea that he belongs to the highest caste of all in India—the white caste—the ruling caste.<sup>1</sup> This puts on him certain obligations which he must recognize. He must maintain a certain standard of living, the European standard. He must treat all Indians with reserve. There are certain things he must do and certain

<sup>1</sup> Work such as that of Mary Slessor of Calabar would be almost impossible in India.

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things he must not do. He must not criticize any of the acts of the government—is that not just treason to his own caste? A few years ago one Missionary brother dared to do so in a mild way—it is still remembered against him. He must move in a dignified manner. Some time ago I was going into a village with a senior missionary to visit the Christians and to preach. Our mode of conveyance was perhaps the most uncomfortable that the world has yet invented—a bullock cart. Yet in India, with the sanctity attached to the cow and the place given to the bull—such vehicles are far more “respectable” than horse carriages in the eyes of the country people. As I preferred to walk I got down and did so. When we approached our destination, my colleague suggested that I should get into the cart and ride into the village, as the Christians would not like it if the preacher came walking into the village! It was undignified and out of harmony with white caste custom! In a neighbouring village, or rather small town, for it must have a population of between thirty and forty thousand, the same mission has founded and allowed two separate congregations of Christians to grow up—one for the high caste and one for the low caste. And of course the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans! How it has arisen I do not know, but as the missionaries have been maintaining caste so the Christians are maintaining caste in their own



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way. Of one very distinguished missionary in South India who shall be nameless, an Indian pastor once told me, " Yes, Dr. A. was a great and good man. He never asked us to dine with him as some of the younger missionaries do. He taught us to know our place. Yes, we are always thankful that we knew him, for we learnt a great deal about Christianity from him ! "

Did the missionaries, realizing at once the danger of caste and its strength in India, consent to receive into the Christian Church by baptism converts who were not yet conscious of the brotherhood of man, hoping that after baptism the growth of knowledge and of the Spirit of Christ would drive out all caste feeling within the Church ? If so, and such was the attitude of St. Francis Xavier, then it has not worked in this way, and caste remains within the walls of the Church, daily denying Him Whom we call Master and Lord.

Then we say that we are trying to train up Indian Christians themselves to take the leadership in their own churches—looking forward as we do to the day when foreign missionaries will not be needed in this land. The indigenous Indian Church will accept the responsibility for evangelizing the country and will produce its own leaders. Well, Christianity has been here for at least fourteen or fifteen centuries, and our great British Missionary Societies for well over a century—working in much toil and

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served by magnificent servants, and after it all we do not see these Christian leaders arising. We of the younger generation are encouraged by being told, "Yes, but it is a slow process." It may be, but a century is a long time ! But it is not so much that it is such a slow process as that we are on the wrong lines. If we come across a promising youth in our Mission schools we ear-mark him. If he progresses as we expect, we somehow or other raise the money and have him sent either to America or to Europe for his higher education. Taking a degree in those countries, he returns to his own country different from when he left it. Now he knows that he is destined for a high post in a Mission ; he might even rise to be a missionary and have a seat and a vote in the Mission Council ! Very often this all goes to the head, and is a barrier between him and his family and friends. No longer can such a one sit cross-legged on the floor and eat his meals with his fingers from a plantain leaf. No, no. He must have a table and chair and crockery and cutlery. No longer does he go barefooted with a turban and a cloth, but he must now wear boots and stockings, trousers and coat and a pith topee ! He but copies his masters, and all copies are bad !

This whole question must be referred to later, and I just mention it here as noting a problem of the indirect effect of Christian Missions.

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Then there is a fearful dread of allowing the Indian any real responsibility. There is a fear of chaos resulting if the Indian is allowed to do things for himself. What matter if chaos does result for a while? In spite of the New Testament parable, there are other ways of the Kingdom of God approaching than that of the seed growing secretly—and sometimes chaos may be one such way. There is just cause for the complaint sometimes made that Indians are never allowed to do things for themselves. If it is a question of church music, a Western missionary is found to lead the movement of reform and to edit the book of lyrics. If the Indian Christians are doubtful of the ultimate validity of the present denominational differences of the Church in India, if they ask whether they can be in truth Anglican Christians, London Mission Christians, or American Mission Christians, instead of leaving it to the Indians to solve the difficulty, it is the European missionary who leads the movement for the discussion of Union proposals. I am not suggesting that the European does these things badly; but I do wish to draw attention to the fact that the Indian is given little opportunity for leadership, with the responsibility of bearing his own burden, devising his own schemes, making his own mistakes and correcting them if need be. All too often the European is allowed to lead, and if mistakes are made he is called in to correct them.

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It is not thus that the spirit of healthy independence and responsibility is developed.

We need seriously to consider what are the essentials of the Christian faith. Can we say that the expression of Christianity as we know it in the West with all its added burden of organization, creed and interpretation, is final and necessary to salvation? In further study of this question we shall find our most fruitful examples of the indirect effects of Christian mission work in India. The early Protestant missionaries were much better Christians than some of us are, but they did have this confusion between the institution and the gospel, and by introducing the institution have created many of our difficulties for us.

Certainly there is much in our expression that seems far from the Master's mind as we see it recorded in those four short books at the beginning of the New Testament, which we have come to call the four gospels. Should we endeavour to transplant the whole superstructure from the West to the East, or should we rather endeavour to bring with us the seed, and planting it here in a new and different climate allow it to grow to its own form? That form undoubtedly will be different from that with which we of the West are accustomed, but does that matter? It will assuredly be beautiful. We have in India birds which we call thrushes, robins and blackbirds; but although of the same

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family they are very different from the European birds of the same name. Why not the same with Christianity ?

Repeating what someone else has said, “ It is my considered opinion that the East is not crying out to the West for light.”

On the whole the considered opinion of the East is that the less that they have to do with Western ideas, Western thought, Western organization and Western policy, the better it will be for the East. There is a very widespread suspicion of everything Western, including religion.

In South Africa, where many Indians have gone to settle, such of them as are Christian dare not cross the threshold of a “ white ” church.

The Maha-Bodi journal says : “ Notwithstanding the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount, Europe is an armed camp. The religion of Europe is the opposite of all that is associated with mercy, gentleness, charity and truth. . . . And yet, *these* people talk of converting *us* to *their* religion ! ”

In 1924, Professor Radhakrishnan, speaking to the Calcutta Missionary Conference on the subject of the recent war, in which all the Christians of Europe were seen by the non-Christian peoples to be engaged in blowing each other to pieces and practising upon each other the most diabolical cruelties known either to civilized or savage peoples, and indulging in an orgy of hatred, said : “ If

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millions of (western) people who conscientiously believe that they walk by the light of Jesus, have not been able to possess the necessary spiritual power either to see the right or to do it, it is too much to expect that Jesus would be such a power in Hindu India."

Again Professor Radhakrishnan insists that western civilization is not an ideal civilization, and has utterly repudiated the teachings of its Founder. "Civilization is what it is simply because it is based on an open repudiation of 'blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.' Those who have inherited it are by no means meek, but they are the most *determined* nations of the world, composing their mutual differences with the sharp edge of the sword."<sup>1</sup>

One of the younger Indians, a devoted disciple of Gandhi, while acknowledging the spiritual grandeur of Jesus, insists that Christians do not follow Him or make Him their ideal, whereas "*Our* Hindu ideals are far more *spiritual* than those of your Christians. *Our* heroes are a Gandhi, an Andrews, a C. R. Das—men who have lived the life of simplicity and self-sacrifice ; *you* glorify the millionaire and the war-lord ; your gods are the bombing plane and the dollar. *We* care for the things that are unseen and eternal ; *you* set your heart on the things that are seen and temporal !"

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Then there is a fearful dread of allowing the Indian any real responsibility. There is a fear of chaos resulting if the Indian is allowed to do things for himself. What matter if chaos does result for a while? In spite of the New Testament parable, there are other ways of the Kingdom of God approaching than that of the seed growing secretly—and sometimes chaos may be one such way. There is just cause for the complaint sometimes made that Indians are never allowed to do things for themselves. If it is a question of church music, a Western missionary is found to lead the movement of reform and to edit the book of lyrics. If the Indian Christians are doubtful of the ultimate validity of the present denominational differences of the Church in India, if they ask whether they can be in truth Anglican Christians, London Mission Christians, or American Mission Christians, instead of leaving it to the Indians to solve the difficulty, it is the European missionary who leads the movement for the discussion of Union proposals. I am not suggesting that the European does these things badly; but I do wish to draw attention to the fact that the Indian is given little opportunity for leadership, with the responsibility of bearing his own burden, devising his own schemes, making his own mistakes and correcting them if need be. All too often the European is allowed to lead, and if mistakes are made he is called in to correct them.

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It is not thus that the spirit of healthy independence and responsibility is developed.

We need seriously to consider what are the essentials of the Christian faith. Can we say that the expression of Christianity as we know it in the West with all its added burden of organization, creed and interpretation, is final and necessary to salvation? In further study of this question we shall find our most fruitful examples of the indirect effects of Christian mission work in India. The early Protestant missionaries were much better Christians than some of us are, but they did have this confusion between the institution and the gospel, and by introducing the institution have created many of our difficulties for us.

Certainly there is much in our expression that seems far from the Master's mind as we see it recorded in those four short books at the beginning of the New Testament, which we have come to call the four gospels. Should we endeavour to transplant the whole superstructure from the West to the East, or should we rather endeavour to bring with us the seed, and planting it here in a new and different climate allow it to grow to its own form? That form undoubtedly will be different from that with which we of the West are accustomed, but does that matter? It will assuredly be beautiful. We have in India birds which we call thrushes, robins and blackbirds; but although of the same



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family they are very different from the European birds of the same name. Why not the same with Christianity ?

Repeating what someone else has said, " It is my considered opinion that the East is not crying out to the West for light."

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This is not to suggest that there is no place for Christian Missionaries in the East—far from that. Missionaries are still needed, though their task is now more difficult than it was, say, fifty or even twenty years ago. “What we most need in all our missionary work is a few saints, a few men who are really living such a life as apostles of Christ ought to live, whose lives are a living testimony not only that they believe what they teach but that what they teach is the most holy and beautiful creed that could be professed. That surely is the way that our Lord both taught Himself and wished that His religion should be propagated by personal influence, like the ancient torch race in which the tired torch-bearer handed on the lighted torch to another. This demands as missionaries men who carry the torch, real Christian saints who will go out full of love and sympathy, without any social prejudice, and who will be careful not to quench the smoking flax nor to break the broken reed.”

Mahatma Gandhi was once asked : “How can Christianity be naturalized in India ?” His answer was :

1. All Christians should begin to live more like Christ.
2. Practise your religion without adulterating it or toning it down.
3. Make love control your lives, for love is central in Christianity.

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4. Study the non-Christian religions more sympathetically to find out what is good in them in order not to harmonize, but to have a more sympathetic approach to the people.

No small task, surely, but He is sufficient.

There is a suspicion occasionally voiced that the Christian missionary propaganda indulged in largely if not solely by the white race is based upon a "superiority complex"—if one might here be allowed to use a word which usually I abominate ! So far as the British people and Indian missions are concerned, it is sometimes suggested that Christian missions are part of the Imperialistic scheme. That is, that by circumstances not to be too closely enquired into, Britain and India are bound together politically ; it follows as part of our responsibility to give India all the good we have ; as we have given them Western education, Western dress and Western speech, so it is also necessary to give them our own religion. I scarcely think the argument to be very serious or one worthy of much discussion, but it deserves mention.

But all this discussion tempts me to try to define the task of Christian Missions. First we must endeavour to agree on the distinctive features of Christianity ; and with Unitarians at one end and the Greek Church at the other it is a supremely difficult task. Nevertheless there is something that is common to them all and which is sufficient to

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distinguish them, so that they can be called Christian. What is it? First, it must have some relation to Jesus Christ, anecdotes of Whose life and teaching are preserved for us in the first four books of the New Testament, the four gospels. And second, it must have some relation to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Then we need not look for uniformity of dogma, creed, ritual or organization. These things are secondary. What is primary is difficult to determine, and I really hardly know what it is. If pressed to answer I would be inclined to state that it is a belief in the Fatherhood of God as revealed in the life of Jesus Christ, and in an increasing ability to discern the truly sacred.

This doctrine of the Fatherhood is, I venture to suggest, the distinctive mark of Christianity. The interpretation of the doctrine must be based on the light that is in the Gospel story. It then includes the brotherhood of all men with their consequent equality in the sight of God. It includes a belief that God cares for us all, feeding us and clothing us and even numbering the very hairs of our head. Yea, He so cares for us and our welfare is so bound up in Him that we are to fear not them that kill the body but after that have nothing more that they can do. Our Father is a God of Love, Who has compassion upon His children. This and much more that might be written on the same subject we see exemplified in the life of Jesus Christ Whom we

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call Lord. "He went about doing good." He lived a life in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Day by day and hour by hour He lived in this consciousness and His was surely a beautiful life of calm and repose and strength. He loved God with all His being and He loved His neighbour as Himself. When He saw a man in need He seems to have been ever ready to help him as far as lay in His power. "He had compassion and healed them."

If the Christian missionary could live thus, there would be no indirect effects of his life. All the effects would be direct, the result of a radiating love. How far is it correct to say that we only have indirect results as our method or personality is less than the highest ?

As to the sacred, He found men bound to superstition and endeavoured to show them what was the truly sacred. Men were regarding the washing of hands and the eating of certain foods as sacred. He taught that these things were not specially sacred, but rather the things which they were neglecting were sacred—the things which proceeded from the heart. The intention rather than the deed was the sacred thing. Sin was not merely a matter of neglecting even accidentally certain ordinances, as eating with unwashed hands, but was rather a question of refusing to live up to the light that is in us. Knowing the higher thing and the better way

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and refusing to follow it. To Him that and that only was sin. This also is a thought that could be much enlarged, but this must suffice.

No one who has lived out East or in Africa but must be impressed by the many and various things that people call sacred. Indeed the lives of the common people are dominated by superstition, and when Christianity comes to such countries, its converts do not at first feel an overpowering sense of freedom from sin but rather an immense feeling of release from the bondage of superstition. They can now stand up to life instead of crawling before it, for the power of the demons is broken for them.

Then is our task not just to plant among the peoples the seed of this rich doctrine of the Fatherhood of God and to help them to discern that which is truly sacred? No two civilizations have developed this doctrine in quite the same way—nay, hardly two countries have developed it in the same way. Sweden and Spain are both Christian countries, yet it could hardly be argued that their Christian organizations could be interchanged without adjustment being necessary. So it is with Germany and Greece, and even with England and Scotland. Taking each the same seed, the resulting plant in different environment is different. Then with India, it is the same. Indians can hardly be expected to become Anglicans, Scots Presbyterians, or Roman Catholics. The polity and doctrine

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that these names stand for are the product of an environment and the fruit of a civilization that is not Indian. We shall expect India to produce its own distinctive polity and doctrine while remaining true to the Gospel narrative.

We should then feel the necessity of carefully placing our emphasis, not on the non-essentials of organization or of creed, except so far as the latter is justified by the Gospel story, but on what Jesus Himself stood for, remembering that Jesus promised eternal life to the man who would love God with his whole being and his neighbour as himself. Such a statement, coming as it does from the Master Himself, would seem to be a rebuke to much of our present Christian teaching and anxiety for creeds and organization. Later we shall have to discuss this question at greater length and in some detail, and I merely mention it in this place as a general principle.

If Christian Missions would agree on these essentials, telling us what is the heart of our message and allowing us to preach it, then we could speak with one voice. But perhaps each is to find out for himself and from his own experience what is the heart of the Christian message, and even so I do not think that would give us fatal diversity so long as we all put the emphasis on the essentials and not on the non-essentials—on the medicine and not upon the bottle ! With some few exceptions this is really what is happening, but there still lingers with



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far too many of us a desire to see our own denominational polity and creeds planted in this land, so that some Indian Christians can say and with some truth that they are but black Scotsmen ! That is the deadly thing against which we need to be warned, for while that spirit is here we shall never see India converted to Christianity nor shall we ever develop that indigenous Christianity which we so much desire to see.

Ordinarily the presence of numerous denominations in India does not trouble me. I believe there are now somewhere about 160 of them ! If we were concerned merely to plant the seed and leave the growth of it to God, it would be no hindrance so long as we have a right perspective of the Gospel message and men imbued with Christian charity. The trouble arises when we put the emphasis on the non-essentials and make points of organization and creed supreme. If we are trying to make Anglicans and Scots Presbyterians of the Indians, then friction is bound to arise ; but if we are trying to make Christians of them, then I see no need for friction. This is where one ventures to suggest—and that with all charity and brotherly love—that Adventists and Pastor Russellites, to name only two such, are often hardly a help but rather tend to confusion. They put the emphasis on what at least the majority of their fellow Christians agree to be hardly the basic principles of our faith.

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Planting the seed, then, one must not be surprised if India produces a type of Christianity very different from that to which we of the West are accustomed ; nor should we be disappointed. Little else is to be expected. When Christianity moved out of its birthplace in Judæa to the wider world it was powerfully influenced by the prevailing Greek philosophy and Greek mode of life. We of Western Europe have inherited this same philosophy, modifying it a little here and a little there, and we have found it comparatively easy to assimilate the current type and thought of Christianity ; though I repeat that even so, each nation has been able, and has felt itself free, to adapt this inheritance. India, I suggest, has not inherited this type of philosophy, but has her own ancient, distinguished, and distinctive thought, and this doubtless will modify Christianity when it gets a firm hold on the country. Indeed, one of the most hopeful signs in India to-day is that she has now the power to distinguish between Christianity and Western civilization, and between the Christianity of the New Testament and that of Christians. If she can maintain this distinction, maybe some day soon someone will arise and develop Christianity from its fundamental principles according to Indian thought, and we should not be nervous lest such a development will exclude some dogmas of Western Christianity which are the product of St. Augustine and the Western Fathers

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of the Church rather than of the Gospel story. As Sir William Ramsay has said : " It was when Christianity appealed direct to the people, addressed them in their own language and made itself comprehensible to them on this plane of thought, that it met the needs and filled the hearts of the Roman world."

What is our hope for Christian Missions in India ? Are we going to win converts, one here, one there, till we have converted the whole of India, or is it more likely that the Indian religions will, by absorbing Christian elements, Christianize themselves ? The individual, one by one method, will be a slow business, very slow. With the aid of mass movements, and after a residence in the country of some fifteen centuries, and nearly two centuries of more or less active Protestant and a longer period of active Roman Catholic Missionary propaganda, the Christian Church embraces only  $1\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. of the total population. Deduct from that number the European and Anglo-Indian population who are not converts to Christianity for our purpose, and the number of Christians who can be traced to the result of Christian Missions will be reduced to even less than this percentage, say little more than one per cent. If this is the result of the active labour of two centuries, it is a long and difficult task to accomplish 100 per cent. For myself I cannot possibly see the end being attained by this means ;

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and in the higher castes especially, and among the better educated of India, I cannot find any hope. At present Christianity is barely touching this class of people, who are on the whole the leaders of the lower classes and their spokesmen. Though Christians are the last people in the world who should bow down to birth, wealth or learning merely, regardless of the character of the persons bearing these gifts, yet it is impossible to neglect such important sections of any community as the higher castes in India represent. It is true that these have an admiration of Jesus as an ethical teacher and as a good man. They are more and more willing to confess that the ethics of Jesus are the highest and best that they know. They even judge themselves and each other by these standards. Their newspapers often and often hold up New Testament ethical precepts as admirable and worthy of emulation. But when it comes to the religion it is a different story. They will have nothing to do with Christianity as a religion. And I claim it is a religion and not merely an ethic. The Christian ethic is impossible and impracticable apart from the religion ; it is the natural outgrowth of the religion, and the two cannot be divorced. To do so and attempt to live up to the Christian ethic is courting disaster. It cannot be grafted on to another religion. A combination of the Hindu religion and the Christian Ethic is impossible. The two

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will not mix. This is why I can see no hope of success for those who preach and teach Christianity as being the "Crown of Hinduism." It is in fact no such thing. This is an unconscious attempt to unite a Christian ethic with a non-Christian psychology. The task is impossible. "The Kingdom of Heaven was not revealed to the reason, however it may be with the attributes of God." The Founder of the Christian morality demanded a complete change of heart from those who would practise it, nothing less than the birth of a new man. Whatever we may think of that as a psychological possibility, it is certain that nothing less will do as a foundation of Christian morality. Without it the most ardent disciple of "universal benevolence" will come only to the painful knowledge that "the wise want love, and those who love want wisdom."

## CHAPTER VII

### MISSIONARY EDUCATION

I now turn to discuss Education, for it is here that I consider that Christian Missions have raised most of their most difficult problems for themselves. I would be willing almost to argue that all the educational work of Christian Missions is an indirect effect of their own work. I mean that they have been driven into this work by the force of circumstances and not as directly Christian propaganda. In many cases Mission educational institutions are the growth from small beginnings intended primarily for the education of their own converts to Christianity, and then opening their doors wider so as to include the non-Christian element. In other cases they are used as the only means of approach to the caste Hindu. But in very few cases, if any, are they either on the one hand purely educational institutions or on the other hand purely Christian institutions. The attempt has been made to combine the two with what I feel are disastrous results. I cannot refrain from quoting the following short extract from a recent mission report. "In the Montessori class, babies of two years old love to come to school and enjoy themselves. To those who watch and train their little lives im-

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pressive truths reveal themselves." Is this a direct or an indirect effect of Christian Mission work ?

It is not my duty here to discuss the educational policy of the Government of India or of the Provincial administrations. This is being hotly discussed elsewhere and as I am dealing primarily with mission work it is to that I turn.

Most missions, in fact all that I know, have associated themselves with the Government in their educational policy. From the elementary schools up to the first grade colleges they receive money grants from Government and are subject to Government inspection. This involves them in teaching certain subjects and almost in a specified way at specified times ! The question of religious teaching I leave for the moment to return to it later. But generally speaking the curricula for the schools are laid down by Government and there is not much room left for any departure from them.

The question of elementary teaching is difficult ; the leakage among the pupils is very great. They are more profitable to their parents at home than at school, and in such poverty as prevails in India even if a boy or girl can earn the equivalent of only a penny or two a week, it is an important item in the family budget. The parents prefer that additional income to sending their children to a school.

In the higher branches for the most part it is a purely literary education that is imparted, and in

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India as in other countries the village boy who has been to College seldom returns to his village after his study. He prefers life in the town and cities, and the result is that a very large number of middle class educated boys are in the cities finding it extremely difficult to eke out an existence. One of the problems at present before the Government is just this—the large number of the educated middle class who are unemployed. Truth to tell, the city markets are over-stocked, and the only solution is for the graduates to return to work in their villages, which for the most part they are very unwilling to do.

Then the commercial element has entered into the University degree to a greater extent in India perhaps than in any other country. The value of the degree is nearly always estimated in terms of rupees. This is the kind of advertisement that appears almost daily in Indian papers—it is taken from the leading South Indian paper. “MATRIMONIAL WANTED.—A Young Husband, *Bachelor* or *Widower*, fair, independent position, real reform spirit, to marry a highly accomplished Iyengar *Virgin Widow* of 15½. Minimum conditions : School Final Pass and some property, or Graduate in decent employ or large property.”

The degree is a means of barter in marriage and fixes the dowry ! The gradation is interesting.

It is the same in the case of employment. The fact that a man holds a degree means that he expects



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higher pay than the man who does not, regardless of real qualifications. It is the degree that counts and not what the degree stands for. While that is so, it distorts the perspective in all studies ; indeed there is very little real higher education in India ; it is saturated with cramming. And the system encourages it. The degree examination syllabus is so overloaded that students and teachers alike have very little time for thought; all their energies are absorbed in covering the extensive ground.

With the growth of vocational schools the situation is improving, and perhaps some of the present complaints against the system will soon no longer be justified. Many experiments are being undertaken by missionaries and others in an attempt to find a curriculum more in touch with the needs of India's peoples, and if these succeed they give fair promise of bridging the present gulf between education and life in India.

But why should missions engage in education at all ? It is the duty of the Government to provide facilities for the education of its people, and the Government ought to realize its responsibility in this respect. It is an enormous task in India, but the present British Government has been there long enough to realize its task, and it should have done much more in fulfilment thereof than it has done. Missions sometimes argue that until the Government feels able to do more in this direction then

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they ought to help. But just because the missions have done so much in this direction the Government feels it can do the less. Peoples have a right to education, but it should be a claim on the State and not on philanthropy. If the State was doing its share, then philanthropy might still find a place in providing special kinds of education—what we might call the luxuries of education—but philanthropy should not be called upon to provide the elements of education.

Admittedly it is difficult for Christianity to approach the higher castes in India ; but why should we trouble much about that ? We can preach the Gospel to them. The Christian Church has seldom numbered many wise, many wealthy, many mighty among its numbers, and when it has it is very doubtful if those days have been the proudest days of the Church. When that pioneer Missionary Duff of Calcutta launched into higher education, it was with the avowed object of thus gaining contact with the higher caste people of this land. It was also thought that by teaching these people to think logically, and by giving their minds a scientific training, the inconsistencies of their own religion would become apparent to them and it would collapse as a pack of cards. Doctor Duff, before the 1835 General Assembly of the Church, said, " Let it then be understood and for ever remembered that in India all systems of learning

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being of a sacred character may be pronounced as really theological. Every branch of some general knowledge which you inculcate becomes the destroyer of some corresponding part in the Hindu system. And if branch after branch be communicated, one stone after another will be thrown down from the huge and hideous fabric of Hinduism. And by the time that an extensive range of instruction is completed the *whole* will be found to have crumbled into fragments—not a shred will be left behind.” We have had more than two generations of this higher education, and missions have done nobly in spending men and money on it. Some of the best Colleges are those of the Christian Missions, but Hinduism has not collapsed and shows no sign of doing so !

Indeed, Hinduism is not the product of logical thought or of scientific minds. It is full of philosophic inconsistencies to our way of thinking, but what does that matter ? It shows an amazing capacity for absorbing within itself its rivals, and it might well be that instead of Hinduism collapsing under this attack, it will merely come to a fuller understanding of the strength of Christianity and adapt itself to absorb that religion also, so we shall have a new Hindu-Christianity with Jesus as the tenth avatar.

If this result is not coming from higher education, then we are told that Missions ought to continue

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in it because of the influence of Christian teaching and Christian teachers. Honestly, is not this much over-rated? The Christian Colleges that are residential Colleges are very few—I recall only one such of the first grade in the part of India which I know. And it is Christian in name only. It provides for its non-Christian students by having separate hostels for them in which the dining arrangements allow them to keep caste. Certainly most Colleges have hostels in some ways attached to the college in which students can live and eat for a fixed monthly charge. In such cases, with a good Christian warden, I grant that strong influences can be exerted on the boys for good. The hostel is the home of the boys during term time, and the extent and quality of the home influences depend on the warden. Missions could develop hostels without indulging in all this expensive higher education; that is if they wished to enter this field at all, and such hostels could be and should be self-supporting. But there are serious difficulties here, at least in the South. Owing largely to caste laws the hostels of a College are arranged on a caste system. The Brahmins will not eat with those of a lower caste, nor must their food be handled by such, thus necessitating what one might call “Brahmin segregation” with Brahmin cooks. So with the other castes and also with the Christians who are seldom vegetarians and thus are not welcome in a Brahmin hostel. The

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result is that a College with, say, five hostels has two of them filled with Brahmins, one caste hostel for non-Brahmin caste-Hindus, one Christian, and one cosmopolitan hostel. This surely cuts at the roots of Christian influence. When the students need and demand such careful class or communal discrimination, all the Christian leaven which might be permeating the lump is boxed up in one hostel.

The influence of the Christian professors can be great or it can be negligible. I could easily cite instances of both extremes. In school there is certainly the usual scripture hour, often taken in turn by the professors. At this the whole school, or rather College, will usually be present. But then it is a scripture hour, and scripture and religion are far apart. I doubt much whether religion can be taught at all ; it seems a kind of thing that is not acquired by learning so much as by infection ; it is like smallpox—it is caught. Then the Indians of all people on this earth are already religious ! The result is that, for the non-Christian members of a College, this hour is an infliction to be borne cheerfully for the greater glory it worketh later, for are not the Colleges of the Missionary Societies good colleges ? They go to the class as one in England might go to a lecture on the Hindu Scriptures—not with the least intention of carefully weighing the merits and claims of Christianity and Hinduism ; to thus become a Hindu is the last

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thing in the world that we should dream of—we go because it is a means of acquiring information which might be useful to us or because it is a strange subject about which we are ignorant and ashamed of our ignorance. So with these non-Christians. I know many good caste Hindus who got the scripture prizes at Christian Colleges in their younger days.

In the course of the actual College teaching I do not see that the Christian point of view can be much presented—at least in some subjects. Chemistry, physics and mathematics do not seem to be capable of a Christian presentation. English literature, history and philosophy might be a little more elastic, but I am told that the degree syllabus covers so much ground that all the time of teacher and pupil is needed, if it is to be done at all, and there is no time for diversion on Christianity.

The private influence of a professor can vary very much according to the personality of the professor and also according to where he lives. In Madras city, some of the professors live four and five miles away from the institution they serve. Boys will not go that distance after college in the evening in order to see a professor, unless it is very urgent. And living such a distance away from their work they are themselves eager to depart home as soon as it is over. I know at least three men who have felt themselves thus handicapped, and who have not returned to their old educational

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work, feeling that they were not able to pull their full weight in Christian influence.

When this factor of distance is not present there is often that of personality. Some of us of the West are not very approachable, we are naturally shy and retiring. We resent people troubling us, we are not very happy or at ease in the presence of strangers. Add to this the difference in colour, and in standards and modes of life, and it will be realized how difficult it is to get natural contact with the Indian, who is also shy and retiring. In many cases this initial disadvantage is overcome and great influence can be exerted ; but in some cases it is not.

Then many of the European professors in the first grade colleges, at least in the south, know no vernacular. Their work allows them little time for its study, and they do not attempt it. Even the principal sometimes does not know the vernacular of his pupils. I do not suggest that this hampers their work as educationalists, but I do suggest that it is a severe limitation in their approach to their pupils. Conducting the conversation in English one does not get very near to the heart of the Indian student !

In " A Survey of the Educational System of the Philippine Islands," issued recently by the Philippine Government, appears this paragraph :

" That aspect of conduct designated good manners depends to a large extent upon mastery of special

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and approved forms of speech. Even so important a factor in life as good morals and right conduct depends largely upon a familiarity with language forms. Consequently, attention might well be given to the possible use of the dialects in giving instruction to children in manners and morals."

A suggestion such as this needs careful reflection. Is there something peculiar in religious and moral instruction which demands instruction in the child's mother tongue, whereas a foreign language may be used as a vehicle in "professional, intellectual, political and cultural affairs" ?

One result of this situation in our higher educational institutions is that they provide us with very few definite conversions in proportion to the material that passes through their hands, but on the other hand they exert a great influence for Christian moral standards. The "scripture hour" falls into an ethical talk—Christian morals are put forward as the highest code of morals, and as never before it looks as if India were accepting that code of morals. In all kinds of out-of-the-way places we find non-Christians judging each other by Christian standards. The Hindu newspapers often give countenance to this basis of judgment. As for Mr. Gandhi, so for many others, they regard the teachings of Jesus Christ as of immense moral value for mankind, and Jesus as one of the greatest teachers that ever lived ; but beyond that they will not go.



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They tell you that they believe in Krishna, Buddha and Jesus. And what can you do to help such ?

The extent to which missions have engaged in education is obvious to all who know India. The latest figures available give the proportion of Evangelistic to Educational workers as 1 to 1.3, and this last figure tends to increase. To 21,298 evangelistic workers, Indian and foreign, employed by the Protestant Missionary Societies, there are 26,144 educational workers so employed. It would be useful as well as educative to have an analysis of the budgets of missionary societies, showing how much of their total expenditure is devoted to education, but this is not available. The National Christian Council of India, which might have been expected to have such information, states that it has not got it, nor has it had any need for gathering it !

Nor is all this labour and money spent on Christians—far from it. I know of only one college, the majority of whose members are Christian and whose staff is entirely Christian. The other mission colleges have a minority of Christian pupils and in some cases have not got even a completely Christian staff. If one were to estimate the proportion of Christian to non-Christian students in missionary colleges, it would probably be 1 to 3. This raises the whole question of the attitude of missions to education, and I am inclined to argue that while our resources of men and money are so limited, we

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are not justified in devoting so large a percentage of both to educating non-Christians under a Government system of education that ties our hands on every side. Apart from the interference of Government inspectors and the trouble of supplying Government with the returns and information for which they ask, the very fact that the pupils are studying for the public examinations limits the scope of a missionary engaged in educational work, and unless the mission institutions did thus co-operate with the public examination bodies they would soon lose half their pupils—aye, even four-fifths of them !

In a country like this, where the Government is stable and does accept responsibility for the education of its citizens, however feebly it may fulfil that responsibility, I maintain that the limit of the educational responsibility of foreign Christian Missions in higher education is to provide education for the Christian community under Christian influence. If such a policy were accepted, then three-quarters of our higher educational institutions could be closed at once, and the men and money that they represent could be used to better advantage in other forms of labour.

For higher education in Christian institutions I would wish to see a few general maxims accepted by missions. These I briefly refer to now.

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There should be no denominational spirit in these colleges, and I doubt whether any one denomination should entirely support one institution. They should rather be on a union basis—many societies combining in the support of one good institution. But already this is largely accomplished in South India at any rate, and is not a burning question there. Then such colleges should be residential as far as possible ; only students able to live with their parents, or friends within reasonable distance of the college, should be exempted residence. Admissions should be so arranged that always at least 80 per cent. of the students are Christian ; others who come into residence should have no special arrangements made for their dining ; this will obviously exclude Brahmins and other orthodox caste Hindus. All the staff should be Christian, without exception. Yes, I would except the lecturers on Hinduism and Mohammedanism, who should be men of those communities. We who are not within the community can never fully appreciate the spirit of these great bodies of truth, and our students should know something about them.

Few in number as such places would necessarily be, would they not exert a great Christian influence ? First on the students themselves, who in the formative years of their lives would be under Christian influence all the time, and not as at present under the mixed influences of our present colleges—some-

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times, I fear, not very good. There is, of course, the charge of isolation or segregation to be met, but I do not think that is a serious charge. After all, while there are benefits to be obtained by mixing with all sorts and conditions of men, I doubt very much whether such variety is good for the student days, especially for the Indian student, who, while he may be a little older than the corresponding English student, I should judge is much less mature in his judgments and less strong in his self-control. For that reason, and the fact that his company in later years will be sufficiently diversified to satisfy most tastes, I do not think that this isolation would be at all bad, and I would hope that it would give us boys of a much stronger character in the Christian community than we have at present.

Then such communities would be centres of influence in the districts in which they were placed. Consider the influence of the University of Cambridge on its town, with its low infantile mortality rate, and its comparative cleanliness. Would a Christian institution in India not have a much greater influence for good and for Christianity on its surrounding district? It would truly be a light shining in the darkness.

To complete this scheme I venture to think it very desirable that we have in India a Christian University. Such a name need not be a contradiction in terms. India has trebled or even quad-

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rupted her universities in this century, and now has a Hindu University at Benares and a Mohammedan University at Aligar. Why should not the Christians, who are the third greatest community numerically and perhaps the best educated community in India—why should they not have a University? Again there is the cry of segregation raised, but it sounds more plausible than it really is. Truth to tell, our little leaven that is supposed to leaven the lump is so thinly spread over the lump of India that it is not functioning in that way at all! It is in danger of dying out altogether—“going bad,” as some say! We ought to concentrate our forces, and a Christian University would help us in this. There is no doubt at all that the faculty of such a university could be the best in India. Think of the excellent material in our missionary colleges that we should be able to call upon for the proposed University!

With a charter of its own such a centre of learning would be careful gradually to wean its students from mere information to true learning. That is the great need of Indian education to-day, and it would be a great thing if in this as in so many other things the Christians were able to show the way. Also, an important function would be the study of Christian Theology, which might give us light in the present darkness on this subject. At present, excepting Serampore in the north, there is no important centre of Christian theological learning

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in India, and those that do exist are merely copies of Western patterns.

Great results might come from a Christian University with a theological faculty free from the control of Western missions and able to branch out on new lines. It might be the solution of a great many of our present difficulties and give us new light in leading these peoples to a knowledge of the true God and Father.

There are many, very many, practical difficulties involved to which I do not refer, as I am not going into the details of the scheme, but am only suggesting it for the consideration of the bodies concerned.

Before leaving higher education, I turn to the vexed question of what has commonly come to be called the Conscience Clause.<sup>1</sup> I do not intend to raise here the whole question of the relation of Church and State—that would be far too ambitious; yet I should state that I am strongly of opinion that the less the one has to do with the other the better for both. If the question of the Conscience Clause hardly raises this deeper and more fundamental question, it does raise the problem of religious instruction. So far as I know, all missions with higher educational work in India receive Government grants in support of their work. In Madras, if Government recognize a college they will give a

<sup>1</sup> See the *National Christian Council Review*, October, 1925.

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building grant up to 75 per cent. of its cost, equipment grants on the same basis, and an annual grant equal, roughly, to half the net expense of running the college. Thus they share with the management the debit on the school's working. Now in India only some  $1\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. of the population is Christian. In these mission schools which receive Government grants religious instruction is given, and attendance thereat on the part of the pupils is compulsory, and this religious instruction is Christian. These are the facts that have created the problem. In 1917 the matter came into prominence, and it was then generally felt that if missions were not to be allowed to impart this religious instruction, then they might as well retire from the field of education. And also unless attendance at this period of instruction were compulsory it would be a case of talking to a timber yard of wooden benches, for all would exercise their option of being absent.

Opinion has changed since the question first came into prominence, and in some provinces conscience clauses have been inserted in the education codes, notably in Bombay and the United Provinces.

It is the universal testimony of all those who have adopted the clause that the religious usefulness of their institutions is in no way lessened, and that virtually no exemptions have been claimed. In St. John's College, Agra, for instance, only five

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students out of four hundred took advantage of the exemption in the first year, 1922, and no further applications for exemption have been received. At a conference on Christian education in the United Provinces, held at Lucknow, March 2-4, 1925, the following resolution was passed :

“ The Conference records its sense of gratitude at the fact that the introduction of a Conscience Clause in the Province has not circumscribed the religious opportunity or impaired the efficiency of the religious teaching of the school and colleges which have accepted it.”

The question of a general Conscience Clause has been raised in the Madras Legislative Council and also in the Senate of Madras University. In each case the proposal was decisively rejected.

It is important to observe that the acceptance of a conscience clause and the institution of “ voluntary ” religious teaching are quite different things. Under a conscience clause, at the beginning of a session a student is either placed on the roll for attendance or he is removed from it. If he is on the roll he has to attend. Some institutions, e.g., the Lucknow Christian College, have gone beyond the requirement of the conscience clause and made attendance at religious instruction, in the strict sense, *voluntary*. It is to be presumed that they have taken this step believing in its religious efficacy. They have not been compelled to do so by accepting the conscience clause.

I have been unable to find any instance of



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objection being raised to the introduction of Christian ideas and examples, or quotation from Christian books into the teaching of subjects such as history or philosophy, in schools or colleges where a conscience clause is in force. It was feared when the first conscience clause agitation began that the acceptance of the clause would prohibit a teacher from introducing Christian material into the teaching of "secular" subjects, but experience suggests that this fear has proved illusory.<sup>1</sup>

It is to the credit of Missions that at first more than one mission refused all Government grants-in-aid. In 1855 the American Madura Mission declined any financial assistance from Government, fearing the results of such a connection with Government both as to the influence of inspectors and as to restrictions imposed on their freedom in religious teaching. In 1870 they first received Government grants-in-aid, which other missions since 1854 had "held out both hands to receive."

Here are two questions involved—first the fundamental one of Christian Missions receiving money grants from the State, and second, institutions being thus partly supported by a State whose inhabitants are not Christian and which yet makes Christian Religious Instruction compulsory on its pupils. I cannot think that either position is ultimately tenable. Why should Hindus and

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the similar policy of the Roman Emperor Julian.

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Muslims, who together form the vast majority of the population of India, and also provide India with her revenues, give these revenues in support of a Christian College where Christian Religious Instruction is compulsory? If in England, say, the Woking Mosque proposed to start a Muslim school where the teaching of Mohammedanism was compulsory, would the British Government give it a grant-in-aid? No one should be called upon to pay for religious instruction of a kind with which he profoundly disagrees. Non-Christian students go to such Christian colleges and suffer this disability—for such it is to them—because those Colleges are frequently the best available in the district, and they do not fear the result. An amusing incident occurred in the south some years ago. It was a Girls' High School and Prize Day. The prizes had been distributed and one of the invited guests—a non-Christian and a leading barrister in the place—was invited to speak. After exhorting the mothers to educate their daughters, and extolling the virtues of this particular Christian High School whose guest he was, he proceeded, “And why do you not send your daughters to this school? You agree that they should be educated, you agree that this is a good school, what hinders you therefore? Are you afraid of the Christian teaching that is given here? Do you think that your daughters will become Christian? If so, be

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comforted. In thirty years' experience of this place, I have never known that happen ! ”

I know of at least one Christian High School that had to close its doors for some time because of the excitement consequent on two of its boy pupils becoming Christian and being baptized.

The very tolerance which the non-Christian shows towards our Christian religious instruction in the schools and colleges is its own condemnation. It is in their opinion not to be feared—and it seems as though practically they are right. It is harmless. Then why should we make it compulsory ? Compulsory religious teaching is surely as nearly a contradiction in terms as we can get ! It is the very last thing that should be compulsory, and it would be but an act of grace on the part of all Christian Colleges and Schools to forgo their present right of compelling attendance, and not only adopt a conscience clause, but also go further and make attendance absolutely voluntary. The numbers at the morning hour might be thus reduced, but I doubt very much if the good work done would be at all diminished. If they do not thus act, it is not at all unlikely that the Government will soon impose it from above. It only needs the growth of a public opinion in India to make the present position intolerable—as it really is. If the position were reversed the British would be the first to cry out against this “wicked wrong” and demand religious freedom.

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Here is the reverse side of the medal. The Minutes of the meeting of the Missionary Educational Council of South India held on August 8th, 1926, contain *inter alia* the following :

“The fact was brought out that in certain Government Training Schools distinctly Hindu songs in praise of specific gods and goddesses are used, and that Christian students are expected to sing them.

“The matter was referred to the Executive.”

What is one to make of it all ?

The Act of 1904 saw the rise of the Passive Resisters in Great Britain. The situation is much worse in India, for non-Christians are compelled to pay for Christian religious instruction. But the British do not suffer, so nobody complains ! May the missions do voluntarily what the Government might soon impose !

An Indian Headmaster of a High School, who is not himself a Christian writes in an article in the *National Christian Council Review*—

“Let me explain more fully, before I proceed further, why the first condition is considered necessary. Whatever may have been done in the past, and howsoever the procedure may have been justified, it may be taken for certain that a Conscience Clause in the Education Manual or Act is bound to come, sooner or later. No popular minister can justify or succeed in convincing a council of elected members that it is desirable to let a missionary

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institution getting aid from Government compel non-Christian students to attend lessons or lectures on the Bible. Suppose a Muhammadan or a Hindu institution tried compulsorily to teach non-Muhammadan or non-Hindu students—say Christian students—in the tenets and beliefs of Muhammadan or Hindu faiths. The position is unthinkable. The missions would have been the first to raise a howl against the iniquity of the attempt. Would the educational officers have dared to prevent the opening of a mission school in that case on the ground that the Muhammadan or Hindu school must be full, as laid down by the Educational Manual, before a new school can be allowed to open? But at present, in certain places, Government-aided and even unaided schools are not allowed to open, because a missionary institution is there and it is not full, and it does, of course, give compulsory religious instruction. So far the public has tolerated such things, because its voice had little chance of being heard, as against the influence of missionary bodies; but with elected members of the councils, ministers depending upon popular support and educational agency more and more Indianized—with nationalistic feelings getting stronger and stronger—the voice of opposition will also get stronger and stronger and ultimately succeed. It seems to me that the wisest course for missionary bodies is to voluntarily give up their right, before

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angry feelings are roused which may sweep away even useful and valuable aspects of their work.”<sup>1</sup>

In addition I consider that the Christian Missions should abandon all Government grants-in-aid. This again on principle and merely forestalling what must inevitably come. I cannot see a completely Swaraj Government in India continuing to give grants-in-aid to Christian Colleges. The refusal of such would mean a great curtailing of our present activity, but I do not look upon that as an evil. We should cut our coat according to our cloth, and if we can have only a lounge coat instead of a morning coat, then let us be happy with a lounge coat ! Admittedly it would be difficult thus to break connection with Government, but we should breathe more freely if that were done, and we were free from inspections and government returns which occupy so much of our time at present. With a system of purely Christian institutions and a Christian University it would be a much easier proposition, but even now it should be done. It is peculiar how ideals for which we would die in the West do not turn one of our hairs out in India ! How many of the non-conformist bodies in England would tolerate their churches receiving grants-in-aid from Government, and with their keen sense of religious toleration would countenance compulsory attendance at Christian religious teaching ?

<sup>1</sup> The *National Christian Council Review*, March 1926, p. 147.

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Here is the confession of an Indian :—

“ Here in Poona I have talked with many educated Hindus. They have lost faith in the Hindu religion and they imagine that no religion and no sacred books can satisfy their reason. It is partly because we have taught so far in our schools and colleges to Hindu young men that the Bible is verbally inspired, and if they cannot believe in the scientific accuracy of the story or stories of creation in the Book of Genesis, and if they cannot believe that Jonah was actually alive in the belly of the whale for three days, then they cannot become Christians ! In fact, it seems to me that even compulsory Bible-teaching in our mission schools and colleges may be doing more harm than good. For the Hindus have the idea that missionaries come to India to force their religion down the throats of people who do not want it. Nay, they even think that missionaries have their salaries increased according to the number of converts they make, and therefore that the missionaries are doing their work for the sake of money. So often, Hindu young men who have had their education in missionary institutions boast that they know as much of Christianity as anybody else. Because they have been forced to read some of the Gospels, they use their little knowledge to attack Christianity and ruin their own souls.”<sup>1</sup>

The question, then, is this : What is our aim in education ?

<sup>1</sup> The *National Christian Council Review*, Dec., 1925, p. 573.

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Some educationalists of repute are now inclined to hold that as all life is one—religious and secular—so all education is one, and it is wrong to divide on the basis of secular education and religious education ; that as you teach the child the love of the good, the true and the beautiful, it will not only be acquiring knowledge, but also be acquiring true religion. And the more natural the growth of the child the better will be the ultimate religion. As a theory of education this has much to commend it, and if our mission institutions in India would adopt some such principle, and have the complete oversight of the children with the co-operation of their parents, they might be encouraged to extend their educational activities ; but the position is far from that. The association with the Government on the one hand and public examinations on the other cramps their style. The aim of ninety-nine per cent. of our students is to pass the examination ; and this aim dominates them as no similar aim dominates an English student. This means that colleges must teach with this end in view, and very definitely in view ; and anything that does not very directly lead to this is of little use in the curriculum. Further, such a theory of education requires the active co-operation of the parents of the children, which it is impossible to obtain in the present circumstances in India. It would not work with the children under the care of Christian teachers and Christian



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influences in more or less ideal surroundings for, say, thirty hours a week and living the ordinary Indian home life during the rest of the time. What was done at school would be very largely undone at home.

The theory may be sound, and it looks as if it had much to commend it ; but for its success in India we should require a complete change in our background of education. The present commercial spirit would have to be eliminated. The love of pure education would have to be fostered—and it is a delicate plant for these climates ! The institutions would have to free themselves from all outward control, either official with Government or indirect with public examinations. But this is not such a wild and impossible thing as it might sound. I know at least one Cambridge graduate—a Professor out here—who is dissatisfied with the present system of education and is withdrawing from it. It is much too machine-like, and leaves too little room for the development of personality. He at least is one who is willing to try other methods in spite of dismal estimates of their possible success. If a Christian University were founded it might do something to undermine the present value attached to the mere degree, and also award degrees for something else than the accumulation of facts repeated parrot-fashion. How many other such Professors are there in the service of Missions in India ?

I have already referred to Theological education

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in India, and stated that the foundation of a Christian University in India would help enormously in centring this study. It is one of the most serious problems now facing missions. India has had Christianity in her midst as long as most of the Mediterranean countries, and has not produced a single heretic nor a heresy ! Indeed, Indian Christianity has contributed very little to the common stock of the Church or to the life of the nation. It has no burning missionary zeal. Christian communities sit down quite quietly and peacefully surrounded by non-Christians, and they do little to evangelize their neighbours. They show a delightful unconcern for them. And it has produced few leaders from itself. Its great need now is for good pastors, and they do not arise. Somehow or other we do not seem to be able to get just the right men and give them the right training. Maybe it has been for so long living on the West for its culture and its support that it has never learned to stand on its own feet—but be the reason what it may the fact remains.

A Christian University should go far to enable us to improve such matters.

Rather than an increase in the quantity and quality of the higher education, although the latter is sorely needed, what India needs is a broadening of the base of education by greater permeation of the masses, and how to accomplish this is the difficulty.

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Undoubtedly we need a bettering of the class of elementary school at present in existence—but there are dangers to be avoided. To improve considerably the lot of this type of teacher might attract the wrong type. As the eighth quinquennial review says, “A word of warning is needed for the zealous reformer who would spend all available funds in raising the quality of primary education. There comes a point at which, if the pay is made sufficiently attractive, the wrong type of young man considers it worth while to turn, if only for a while, to teaching. The best type of village teacher is the intelligent village boy, who has worked his way through the primary and middle classes with the definite aim of joining a normal school and becoming a village schoolmaster. There is a real danger, if the pay is indefinitely increased, of attracting the out-of-work or failed matriculate—possibly a townsman, certainly one who has been unsuccessful in his life’s aim, and who enters the blind alley of the village teacher’s life as a last resort.”

From a review of the rules in force in the various provinces, we get many useful suggestions. It is said to be a matter of universal experience, for example, that the best teacher for children is a woman, and that no amount of pedagogic training can make up the natural deficiency of a man in this respect. We are told that the middle vernacular examination should be the minimum standard for

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teachers, and Rs. twelve per month the minimum pay. No teacher should teach more than fifty pupils or more than one class. In some cases the teacher may have the assistance of his wife in order to be able to fulfil these conditions. There should be one supervisor for twelve to thirty schools—a wide margin. In the Punjab there is a school every two miles. Bombay aims at having a school in every village with a population of two hundred. In Bihar and Orissa the rule is to have an infant school for every two and a half square miles, a lower primary for every ten and an upper primary for every twenty-five square miles. One fact that shows how necessary it is to improve the quality of primary education is that thirty-nine per cent. of the pupils relapse into illiteracy. "The night school, in our opinion, is an institution the usefulness of which is not sufficiently recognized, if only as a means of preventing this relapse into illiteracy."

Seriously to interfere with the present curriculum of elementary schools does not seem to be very advisable or very successful. Many in trying to relate the curriculum to village life are concentrating on agriculture and cottage industries, but it is very questionable whether this should be attempted in the early stages. There is a great deal said and written at this stage of our development about ruralizing education and teaching agriculture and other things of prime importance to the children of cultiva-

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tors who make up the vast majority of the school population of India. But the Education Commissioner to the Government of India says it is a mistake to suppose that any steps to ruralize education will appeal to the rural parent. The farmer sends his son to school not to learn farming, about which he knows more than the teacher, but to get an education that will protect him against the landlord and the moneylender, or it may be to escape from the rigid social barriers imposed by caste, or to obtain some small Government or clerical employ. If this is so, then the three "R's" should continue to be the basis of such education, taking its examples from objects with which the scholars are familiar in everyday life in the village, and not from translated English school handbooks and primers. This foundation well laid, then the education can go on to tackle the question of agriculture and village industry.

The Bishop of Gloucester says, "Education is not necessarily good : it may be very bad. It may do a great deal of harm. The only true thing about it is that it is important. A great deal of the writing of the present day suggests that, provided you have education, and provided you spend a great deal of money on it, the result must certainly be satisfactory. This is of course not the case. Many boys and girls have their lives spoilt by unsuitable education !"<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Church Quarterly Review*, No. 207, p. 127.

## CHAPTER VIII

### MISSIONARY INSTITUTIONS

FROM the problem of education it is a natural transition to pass to the more general question of the place of institutions in general in our Missionary endeavour. Here Missions have raised a problem for themselves. Without including the number of Elementary Schools and such smaller institutions, it is recorded that the Protestant Missionary Societies have 25,000 institutions in India and Ceylon. This number is made up of Colleges, High Schools and Hostels, Printing Presses, Agricultural Settlements and Co-operative Societies, Dispensaries, Hospitals, Leper Institutions and Tuberculosis Sanatoria, Orphanages and Homes for the blind, for women, and for converts. The total number of schools and colleges maintained in India by Protestant Missions in 1923 was 14,244, and they educated in the collegiate grade 20,387 young men and 2,173 young women ; in the secondary grade 77,178 boys and 30,646 girls ; in the primary grade 287,576 boys and 172,583 girls. The figures for Roman Catholic institutions are not available at this moment. They must be almost as high, if not even higher ! Of the foreign workers in India, rather more than half are fully engaged in institu-

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tional work, compared with just under half in Pastoral and Evangelical work. And institutions tend to increase in number and complexity. Mission headquarters stations are usually full of all kinds of large buildings serving different institutional purposes.

One missionary who feels the burden of this increase of official and routine duties, the filling up of returns and the checking of ledgers, expressed himself thus before a group of his fellow missionaries—

“At the outset I think we must all feel that for this end we desire some great simplification of our complicated tasks, and some great reduction in the amount of official duties which fall to the missionary’s lot. I don’t think St. Paul had nearly as many affairs and arrangements to consider as we have. We really have too many, and nearly all of us by the time our probation is over have too much to do. The tendency seems to be for us to have more and more of this work. We could be better men and women, much more effective spiritually, if we were a little freer and less tired. Surely *one* of the aims of all developments of missionary policy nowadays should be this one of simplification of the missionary’s life and work, and diminution of the average missionary’s official burdens.”<sup>1</sup>

If a Christian missionary is on tour and camping

<sup>1</sup> The *National Christian Council Review*, March, 1925, p. 97.

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in a village, how seldom does he do or get the opportunity for doing any spiritual work or of giving "ghostly counsel and advice." Some well wants cleaning out, a building wants repairing, and the local congregation cannot do it for lack of funds ; or somebody wants financial help in order to educate their children at a good school out of the village.

One would not wish to deny that by the very nature of our task we must engage in some kinds of institutional work ; but I am raising the question here in order to enquire whether we are not overburdened with institutions and in danger of killing the spirit of Christianity by these organizations.

The natural tendency is to centre your institutions in one place and thus make the question of supervision the easier—and also often one institution is dependent to some extent upon another. This tends to concentrate Christians in one place and withdraw them from their villages.

The gospel bids us seek first the Kingdom of God, and all these things will be added unto us. We are ourselves doing the adding and trusting that thus the Kingdom of God will come.

One result is that we are not producing a robust, self-supporting community, but rather one that is dependent upon the missionary and his resources for all things. It is a danger always besetting the Christian Church that our people should expect



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prosperity in material things. On the Mission field too often we hear the argument for Christianity based on a comparison between the so-called Christian peoples and the non-Christian. It runs something like this—"Look at our country and our people. Here we are depressed and plundered—not masters in our own house. We are ignorant, poor and needy, the spoil of the Christian nations ; and look at Britain—the mistress of the world—rich, educated and powerful. Why ? What makes the difference ? Surely it is this very same Christianity that we need. Let us too become Christians and we shall be rich, and powerful, and soon be able to drive out from our country these foreign oppressors." Too often we hear variations of that theme, not played by the foreign workers but by the Indian Christians, and it is one against which we must set our face very sternly.

I have myself heard a pastor say to first generation Christians, "see how your status has been improved since you became Christians. Is it not a good thing to be a Christian ?" And I have been advised to help the non-Christians and they will soon become Christian ! Indeed, sometimes one hears the direct question, "If I become Christian what employment will you give me ?" The gospel does not promise education, money, position, comfort or influence ; it promises the cross, and we should teach our people to take up the cross and follow Christ. But then

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there is the example of the foreign Missionary ! The Indian Christian looks upon our salary as princely. I find it difficult to live on mine. They look at the prestige we enjoy—personally I hate it. They think of our resources of mind and money—I find it difficult to maintain either. We can preach the pure doctrine of the Word as we see it, and be outspoken against parasitical Christianity and moral sins ; they dare not, for their position is much less stable than ours. We can go without fear of persecution, they live in daily dread of it. It is all right for us, it is not so for them.

To be a Christian in India is a hard task—it is at home too ! But in India if a man becomes a Christian he is cut off from the family estate if there is any. To his parents and relatives he is as though dead. He finds it difficult to get work from the Hindu landlords—the services of the village washerman are denied him, and violence even is often used. The missionary then feels a necessity to help such converts by providing them with such work or other help as will keep body and soul together at least for a few years. This is often best done by the creation of an industrial institution in some place where such converts can be supported and can learn some trade or do agricultural work. Then these things grow and we have industrial schools, lace schools, agricultural settlements, printing presses and what not on our hands. I wonder

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if this kind of thing is right ? So far as we can we ought to help our brethren and save them from starvation and persecution, but there is the other side—that we should encourage them to get victory over the world and to fear not them that can kill the body and after that have nothing more that they can do. They must not withdraw from their persecutions, but by patience under them gain victory over them. Only so I believe would we get the stout, robust Christianity in India which to-day we have not got. It is a hard saying, but so are many of the gospel sayings, and after all the Master Himself was crucified.

An Indian writer who is a member of the Servants of India Society in a recent article says—

“ It may seem almost superfluous to stress this point, when so much actual missionary work is concerned already about work on this common basis of natural religion. Already it is hardly an exaggeration to say that no Mission is considered complete which does not go in for educational, medical and ‘social service’ work generally. Famine relief, agriculture, temperance, hygiene, women’s education, hospitals, aid in epidemics, maternity care, civics, co-operation, workmen’s institutes, wholesome lodgings, playing fields, journalism ; nothing is nowadays considered outside the scope of a Mission. What are all these activities but attempts at bringing about the Reign

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of God ? Yet I venture to think that it is not otiose to stress even to-day the fact that the Reign of God is primary. Unless Missions are quite clear themselves, and make it quite clear to others : (1) that all these activities are good and worthy ends in themselves, and (2) that for all that, these activities do not constitute Christianity, the danger seems to me not merely imaginary that on the one hand missionaries may look upon these activities as so much stage property, merely intended to render more effective the sole object they have in view, proselytization ; and that on the other hand non-Christians may be put off the quest for Christ by imagining that in these activities they have already, and without Christ, found all that even Christ could give them.

“ Even to-day I think it is very necessary to stress the fact—at least if addressing the missionary-hearted—that for the sick to be cured, for slums to be abolished, for the ignorant to be instructed, is so good that it is its own end, or rather, perhaps, that the change effected is from a condition opposed to God’s will to one in conformity with God’s will, and therefore worth doing for its own sake. ‘ Who is not against us, is with us,’ hence even if the motives of non-Christian collaborators in such works are not identical with our own, they surely are doing some part of God’s will, even as we are doing. Hence I venture to think that Christians having a

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vocation to medicine, to social service, to education, are well employed 'about their Father's business,' though joining medical, social or educational institutions which ignore, and members of which may even deny, the Christian motive. But I would go even further. Though no Christian missionary nowadays may tolerate even the idea of bribing non-Christians into the Church of Christ by medical missions, orphanages, etc., the fact remains that large non-Christian sections do believe that such alone is the motive ; and so far from being impressed by the self-sacrifice of missionary workers so employed, they discount it all, because done, as they believe, not for its own sake, but as a proselytizing method. It seems to me, therefore, most desirable that Christians should increasingly demonstrate beyond cavil that their medical or educational work is to them of primary importance, and it seems to me that such demonstration could take no more cogent form than that of serving in hospitals, schools, etc., under non-Christian management. The question does not even arise perhaps in Africa or Greenland ; but here in India (and in China) the plan is not merely a speculative contingency, but a very real and possible alternative to much actual missionary work. And when I suggest that Christians should so serve I would even demand that they did it, not with the mental reservation of engaging in a *praeparatio evangelica*, but with an

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absolutely open mind (and therefore a humble one) as to whether such work of theirs for God's Kingdom should prove in the end to have been such 'preparation' in the sense we mean, or in a sense of which this generation of ours knows nothing yet. The Y.M.C.A. is doing this kind of work, and is doing it splendidly ; but just because one welcomes it so whole-heartedly one may be forgiven for doubting the propriety of retaining the "C" in the title. Already in India the Y.M.C.A. receives munificent endowments from Hindus and other non-Christians ; in practice adherents of all kinds of faiths already join together on this basis. Why not then candidly acknowledge that the practice is right, because it springs from a theory which is right too, namely, that the bringing about of the Reign of God is a matter for every human being *qua* human being ; that it is not a matter for this or that supernatural religion, but for the natural religion which is common to all men ? ”<sup>1</sup>

We agree with this Christian writer in much that he says. If medical work and education are worth doing at all they are worth doing for their own sakes, as ends in themselves and not merely with the object of subserving other interests—which is, to put it plainly, a bait. They are only worth doing if they can be done well, and Missions should realize that there is little virtue in numbers. To have a

<sup>1</sup> The *National Christian Council Review*, June, 1925, p. 223.

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large number of institutions is no credit to a society ; unless we know what kind of institutions they are we cannot evaluate their worth. In the case of elementary education this is a particularly relevant remark. Most missions of importance have numerous elementary schools badly staffed and badly equipped. Money is short and the work urgent, therefore anything is better than nothing. But is it ? The result is that in some cases our elementary schools have not got the goodwill of the villagers, and the work done in them is desperately poor. If we could set ourselves to engage only suitable teachers and pay them a decent salary, it might not be any extra burden to the Societies ; for a better type of teacher would engage the goodwill of the villagers and probably the village school would be better supported and the fee income increase accordingly. But that is not our point here ; the danger is that some Christians think it quite legitimate thus to bait the hook—a very pernicious doctrine.

But if these institutions are not “ bait ” for Christianity what are they ? Would the supporters of our Foreign Missions, the Christians and Church members at home who subscribe to the funds, be willing that their money be spent in purely educational work or in purely social work ? Do not Mission advertisements and appeals often themselves suggest that by doing this work we are preaching the gospel to the non-Christians ?

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What is really meant by the statement that our Missionary societies are definitely missionary in their objective? And what exactly is the relation of this objective to, say, medical work? That is really the root of the problem. If we are to engage in these humanitarian labours—and perhaps nowhere are they more needed than in India—then we should declare our purpose without any ambiguity. They should be engaged in because of the need for them, and not because they give us contact either with the high caste or the low-caste and give an opportunity for preaching Christianity to them. The confusion which at present exists in our own minds is reflected in the minds of the Indian, Christian and non-Christian. They suspect it is bait and do not bite! If we were clearly understood to engage in this work for its own sake, I am sure our hospitals and institutions would rise to much higher levels of influence in India. The present nauseating feeling that sometimes arises in the Indian breast when we talk to them of “Christian Hospitals” and “Christian Colleges” would disappear and they would be welcomed much more freely than they are at present.

There is also a danger involved in the confusion between being engaged in good works and being a Christian—and these things are far from being the same. Many of us try to love our brethren and have little love left for God! The two things must go



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together ; and unless our institutions are expressions of our love of the brethren under the impulse of our love of God they are failures. If they are accessory tools in our effort to convert Indians to Christianity we should do without them. Truth standing in its own light must be allowed to commend itself to the mind free from hypocrisy.

But to produce the mind free from bias is the difficulty, and here might be the place for education to play its part.

There is a great tendency in our day to add the tag 'Christian' to something or other and think that thereby we change its meaning. Thus we have much talk of "Christian Justice," a contradiction in terms ! Justice is merely retaliation, and Christianity knows nothing of that ; and to add the word Christian to it does not alter its nature. Christianity should talk of love, and not this cumbersome term of "Christian Justice." So with "Christian Education"—what does it mean and what differentiates it from mere education ? Are Oxford and Cambridge for instance centres of education or of Christian Education ? If the term is meant to imply merely education by Christians, then there seems little need to add the word "Christian" to term. But is not more meant ?

## CHAPTER IX

### EVANGELIZATION

By this title I do not mean to suggest that what I hereafter describe is the only method of evangelization, but I do wish to suggest a contrast between evangelization and proselytism. The latter I take to be the type of mind which aims at adding converts to its own community regardless either of how they are obtained or how they fare once they are within the fold. As an example of this we might be allowed to name St. Francis Xavier, for whom numbers seem to have been the great objective. Although I thus name a Roman Catholic saint, I also confess that many Protestant Missions have been guilty of the same attitude. The *Indian Social Reformer* refers to proselytism as follows—"It is sufficient to say that proselytism is the method of recruiting non-Christians to Christianity much in the same way as labourers are recruited to colonies or soldiers to regiments by prospects of social and economic amelioration, better food, better clothing, better housing and, above all, a protected life. The Salvation Army, for whose social work we have nothing but appreciation, is the avowed exponent of this method, while other missions follow it more

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or less under names not so suggestive of Army methods.”<sup>1</sup>

In contrast to this, I take evangelism to mean that the preacher or missionary is conscious of possessing a message of good news or a Gospel which from his own experience in life he feels and knows to be good news. This gospel he is certain is capable of standing on its own feet, and in its own light commending itself to the unbiassed mind. It then needs no further extraneous aids than merely to be proclaimed, and being proclaimed faithfully it will work out its own results. All aids or helps to such a gospel are really hindrances. It must have free course—and then it will be glorified.

I must attempt to describe briefly the usual mission organizations. The head body and organ is, of course, the Missionary Society or Committee at home. In England this is usually a separate society not directly controlled by any Church—except the Presbyterian Society which is a direct department of the Presbyterian Church of England. In England only in this Church and the Roman Catholic Church does Church membership entail direct responsibility for foreign missions. The bigger societies have divided the field on a territorial basis, so that for instance in South India the area round Madura is occupied by the American

<sup>1</sup> The *Indian Social Reformer*, vol. xxxvi., No. 44, p. 686.

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Madura Mission (Congregational), South Travancore is occupied by the London Missionary Society, North Travancore by the Church Missionary Society, and so on till the whole field is covered. The mission in a district will select a headquarters at which it will probably concentrate its higher institutional work. Here will be stationed at least one Western Missionary and in all probability many more. The larger towns and villages in the area will be similarly occupied so far as men and money are available. These form strategic points from which the work of the Mission is carried on. Usually the Western Missionaries in the area form a Mission Council which elects a chairman and a secretary and which in consultation with the home committee decides and directs the policy of the Mission.

Now these Western missionaries cannot possibly do all the work, and they employ Indians of various grades to work under them, such as Assistant Missionaries, Evangelists, Catechists, Colporteurs and others. In the eyes of the Indian all these grades are carefully classified and the proper prestige attaches to each—as well as the proper salary. To be elevated from a catechist to an evangelist is a very desirable promotion, but if the next step to an Ordained Pastor is possible then it is still more desirable ! There is so much prestige attached to the Guru or Swami. And it means an increase in

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pay and allowances. All these subordinates are paid by the missionary out of Mission and Congregational funds, and he is responsible for their supervision. If they are paid monthly, probably at the time of payment he will conduct a small retreat for them and give some theological instruction.

The duties of these subordinates are various and multitudinous. They are to visit the villages in their areas and to engage in open air preaching. More especially they are to help in instructing any enquirers in their areas and in cases where churches are without settled pastors they have the oversight of such congregations.

Now this does look very like the system of the Roman Government and its Pro-Consuls and Satraps. You place your head-quarters in the largest town in your area with outposts in all the next largest towns and subordinates in the other places, and you are not content unless the whole territory is thus covered. Thus imitating the system of the Roman Government—now represented by the British—much of its spirit has entered into the Mission organization.<sup>1</sup> The district missionary is much mixed up with institutions which are distinctly connected with Government—for instance schools with government grants or industrial work being similarly helped. With the Mission Councils and larger bodies like the Provincial Christian

<sup>1</sup> Indians often think that the Missionary is a Government Official.

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Councils and the National Christian Council all asking for various information, and in addition to this the burden of Assembly Committees and Church Committees, his post bag is usually fairly full and much of his time necessarily must be spent in attending to correspondence. The oversight of his institutions at headquarters also takes up a little time, and it readily happens that such oversight and correspondence leave him very little time for either preaching in the villages round about or in study for his own mental development. Nowadays he more often than not has a motor car at his disposal, and if he does do any village work it is the villages on the main road or adjacent to it that receive attention ; and, further, whereas in the old days the missionary would travel by slow bullock cart, which necessitated his staying the night in the village, he now rushes out and back in the same day. How much he thus loses and how much the villagers thus lose it is difficult to estimate. Doubtless there was much discomfort in the old method. The journey was slow and one felt every pebble on the road, for the carts have no springs. You had to take practically all your food with you, and were never sure of the kind of accommodation that would be available in the villages. It was far from an attractive business on this side of it, but it was all forgotten when in the cool of the evening, as the sun was sinking and the moon rising, one after

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another would come to you and sit in quiet conversation—always good listeners and very respectful. Is it not in the evening or in the darkness that our hearts are the sweetest, when conversation is the freest and companionship and friendship the ripest and deepest? Bright sunshine and deep thoughts do not go together. They would hear you to the end with patience, then they would tell their troubles and cares. Two hours of such intercourse was worth many motor cars! And the advent of the motor car has tended to emphasize the already wide difference between the status of the missionary and of his converts. In fact it is sometimes hard to distinguish a missionary from a Government servant. The attitude to their work and their methods of tackling it are so very similar—though their income is totally different! It is not the men who are at fault or to blame, it is the system.

If the system has attacked the missionaries in this way, it has attacked what one may call, without offence, the subordinates, in a worse degree. They have become very much like Government servants. If they go away from their village they must receive an additional allowance based on the mileage, and if they have to stay the night in another place, they must get an allowance for that. Every item of expenditure is carefully recorded and charged up to the mission, and I have seen very unworthy

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haggling going on as to the amount of travelling allowance and whether the rate should be four annas a mile or six annas ! I fear many of them regard their occupation as a profession and not a vocation. The spirit of service and self-sacrifice has been commercialized. The Government system has further crept in, and I know at least one mission where the catechists are required to produce monthly a list of villages visited. I saw one such list of eighty visits a month ! Doubtless they were short visits ! I have also heard of them manufacturing converts in order to please the missionary and to secure the desired promotion to the next grade.

I do feel strongly that if we ask people to help us in this way and appoint them to be evangelists and catechists we should trust them and not so very carefully and minutely supervise their movements. If they are good Christians as they should be, considering their work, then we should trust them to do their work as unto the Lord. If they are not such and we cannot trust them, then neither should we employ them to do this work. Either one or the other. And we should not encourage them to look upon this task as a profession. All travelling allowances ought to be abolished. They should be paid a living wage, but on the same proportionate scale as the Christian missionary. Indeed we are not paid wages. We get subsistence allowance, and I cannot even subsist on mine ! Why should not the



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Christian Church in India be tutored in the same spirit? I have a grave suspicion that the whole method is wrong and wants revising, but before I pass on to that I wish to say here that I also admire the work done by many of our Indian helpers. Without their help the work would have been impossible, and many of them are excellent, self-denying men and women. I am only sorry that I cannot testify thus for them all.

But is not the whole method altogether wrong? There is no room in the Christian Church as at present organized for the Sanyasi. To all Indians this is the ideal religious figure. One who has renounced all riches, who possesses nothing and wants nothing (cf. St. James), who goes from place to place teaching as he can and being supported by charitably disposed people. Thus they wander from Temple to Temple, covering thousands of miles. The Sadhu Sundar Singh has adopted this kind of life, and he has caught the ear of the people. They listen to him. What a change there would be if we could start an order of Christian Sannyasi! We would get the ear of India as never before, and the heart too. India cannot understand at all the Christian Catechists being paid a monthly salary and a travelling allowance based on mileage. They think it savours too much of the mart! When our catechists go to some of the villages they are

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told that they are paid for coming there and people listen to their preaching as so much routine to be endured for a season in the full assurance that the intruder will depart in due time. He is paid for it—just as a Government officer is sent to inspect some office in the village—he is also paid for that and will depart in due season. But if our teachers were imbued with the old Indian love of religion and were being “burned up” in preaching it, God knows what impression we might make on India. A missionary of wide experience in India recently told an Edinburgh audience that his considered belief was that if the Christian missionaries had been sent out to India without any salary Hinduism would now be dead and decently interred.

And what about the foreign missionary—what place is there for him? Well, he has not got the hope that India will be converted by his efforts. We all know that it is the Indian Church itself that must take over this responsibility. We do not know and never can know the Indian mind as the Indian knows it, nor can we use the language with the same facility. Nor are we sufficiently numerous to cover the whole country. Yet, for some time there will undoubtedly be a place for the foreign missionary in India.

Certainly our methods must change. Some few years ago at a large hall in Georgetown, Madras, two of the foremost leaders and speakers of the

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missionary cause in South India held an evangelistic campaign. The hall had a seating capacity of over one thousand. The district round the hall was carefully surveyed before the campaign began and apportioned out among Christian workers for more intensive work. Thirty thousand preparatory hand-bills were printed and distributed. Daily fifteen thousand invitations were personally handed to individuals and otherwise distributed by the workers. For eight nights over a thousand people attended that hall ; it was full every night and mostly with non-Christians. The Gospel was preached with power by these two leading speakers in South India. In all, in answer to an invitation given nightly, 180 expressed a desire to know more of the gospel. They gave in their names and addresses and were divided among the city churches according to the district of their residences. No baptisms are known as the result of this campaign.

From the same hall in one year, 200,000 copies of a sixteen page booklet "The Message of the Cross" were distributed. The last page bore the name and address of a well-known missionary with an invitation to call on him and talk over the matter further. He got only two or three enquiries and no baptisms.

It would be wrong to judge both of these efforts by the baptisms resulting from them. That would

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be the very poorest level on which to work. But still, the fact of their absence and the obvious lack of enthusiasm in both cases are indications that some of our old methods have lost their cutting edge. We want something new. A very good missionary, an excellent man, worked for twenty years in one of the poorer quarters of Madras. In all that long time he had three baptisms, and even these three were not all satisfactory. A poor result in numbers !

I would like to see the foreign missionary cut away from all organizations—even his home society. He should be given a roving commission, a tent and a bullock cart, and let loose on the country. Then I would like to see him avoid the great cities and go to the villages. Let him set up his tent in a village for a fortnight at a time. Without going out into the open air and shouting himself hoarse he will find people will come to him. By personal contact he would get to know the people and could sow the seed. If he had with him a few Christian young men of good education, such as our Christian Colleges should turn out, eager to find for themselves lives of service, let him leave a couple of them in the village to continue the teaching and let them be supported in food and shelter by the villagers, Let us be saved from becoming merely officials and let us preach the gospel, not by living in the largest and most comfortable bungalow in the village, and

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trusting that the people will come to us, but going to them. It is very uncomfortable—it is even dangerous to health, and we may bring on ourselves an early death. But do any of these things matter much in the sight of God ? The Kingdom of God might be of more importance than that I should live to be three score years and ten !

I fear that Christian Missions in India have almost forgotten the Christian “sacrament” of shaking the dust from off our feet and leaving the place. We go on and maintain all our Christian mission activity for years in places where there is no response. The teaching of the Gospel is not merely an education of the intellect—it demands a moral response. If that response is withheld, ought we to continue the teaching ? That is why so much of our work is ineffective. Where this response is lacking should we not go away and preach to others who are awaiting us and who might be willing to respond ?

Our Christian forces should be much more mobile than they are. In certain parts of India this century has seen great mass movements of the people towards Christianity. Whole countrysides of thousands of inhabitants express a desire for baptism. As the territory is divided among the Missionary Societies geographically such a movement is felt only by the Society working in that particular area. In one place 8,000 gave in their

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names to be prepared for baptism. It is no light task to undertake the Christian teaching of 8,000 non-Christians who are probably without exception illiterate. To admit them to the church without such education would be a danger to the church. A Society faced with such an alternative usually prefers to postpone the baptism until it can muster greater forces to deal with the situation. But perhaps by then some years have passed and the attitude of the people has changed.

“ A missionary in the United Provinces received one day a deputation sent to him by a mass meeting of 3,000 men, who represented a large number of outcastes in their district. The 3,000 had met in conference for three days to consider whether or not they should all seek for Christian instruction, since so many of their number had already become Christians and were obviously changed men. The deputation that day came to inform the missionary of the unanimous decision of those men to place themselves under Christian instruction and to ask for teachers. But the missionary had no teachers to send ! ”<sup>1</sup>

When a movement like this takes place why should not all the Christian forces in that language-speaking area be concentrated on this soul-stirring place ? Missionaries of all denominations should be willing to leave their work and face the new situation.

<sup>1</sup> *The World Call to the Church—India*, pp. 65-66.

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Surely many opportunities have been lost just because missionaries had not this sense of a common cause and continued their routine work instead of rushing to aid in the newly arisen opportunity. We all think that our own work is of supreme importance—all missionaries need to be continually pondering and renewing the springs of vision. It is so easy to see mole hills as though they were mountains. It is so easy to argue that our own work is of supreme importance and cannot be left even for a day. But probably if it were left for a year nothing very serious would happen ! A certain amount of correspondence would be left unanswered, but would that be fatal to the Kingdom of God ?

The missionary should be as free from all organization as possible. It is appalling how little organization can accomplish, and how much time it claims. Many of us spend almost our whole time starting, helping, tinkering and doctoring some organization or another. This involves letters, reports and committees which gradually eat into our time till we have none left for the pure gospel. We may on some occasion serve the Kingdom well by acting on a committee, but I fancy such occasions will be few and far between. The note of the primitive church was joy and enthusiasm, the note of the modern church is committees and organization—and how little we accomplish ! The missionary should have no concern for making Christians—

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his is to preach the gospel—it is God that gives the increase.

If such a programme of work as I have detailed should be felt to necessitate celibacy—well, what of that? The Indian quite understands and appreciates celibacy on the part of his religious teachers. As it is, the home life of the average missionary is a difficult problem. The missionary ought to do much travelling, leaving his wife alone in the house for lengthy periods or taking her with him much to her inconvenience. Then she should be three months or so every year in a hill station, only part of that time with her husband. If there are children, when they reach the age of six or so the wife has to decide whether she will stay with her husband or go with the children to Europe, a very difficult choice. Altogether the home life of a missionary is necessarily much broken and cannot be the factor as an example to the Christians that the home life of a pastor in England can be.

The question whether a foreign missionary should be granted leave to enable him to return to the West is a much debated one, and one which probably never will be settled. The arguments on both sides are powerful. Most Protestant missionaries look to having a year's furlough every five or six years and returning to their home-land. This not only renews the body after a period in a trying climate, but also enables one to renew contact with



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family and friends, which makes life ever so much richer for us. It sharpens the mind, and by enabling us to get away from our work we are able to get a truer perspective of it. But the missionaries of the Roman Catholic Church have no such provision, and expect to return home again only in exceptional circumstances. I do not know that as a body Roman Catholic missionaries are shorter lived than Protestant missionaries—though I have no statistics on the point. Which is the better system? I think it is a right judgment to make when it is said that the Roman Catholic missionaries know their people better than do the Protestants, but that may be due to other causes such as the Confessional. It must also be recorded that the fact of going home is a little unsettling to a Protestant missionary. It does make us feel that after all we are but pilgrims and sojourners in the land—our real home is elsewhere. The period immediately before furlough makes us hesitant in introducing schemes which we shall not be able to carry through *in absentia*, and the period immediately after is spent in picking up the threads of work left over a year before. There is a continual stream of divided interests, but whether it must be tolerated for the sake of the benefits of furlough I cannot decide. I sometimes feel that our periodical visits to the West prevent us from identifying ourselves more closely with our people, but that is only a personal feeling.

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Yet I am sure that they keep us in a state of divided mind. Our interest in the Home mail is far greater than in the local mail, and generally we read the Home newspapers and periodicals with far greater zest than we do those of India.

I would much like to see the salary system entirely abolished among us and our helpers. An Indian writing in the *National Missionary Intelligence* for January, 1926, says—

“Indian Christians have imbibed from the religious atmosphere with which they are surrounded a great deal of the belief that matter is essentially evil and as a result of that the most spiritually minded among them have a tendency to despise all material aids for the carrying on of religious work. Their ideal of a Christian worker is a wandering Sannyasi who is celibate, who owns nothing in the world and who throws himself on the charity of others. They cannot quite reconcile themselves to the idea that a Christian worker should be given an allowance to keep him above need and to enable him to carry on the work without any anxiety about the support of his family. Though the exigencies of Church life and religious work under modern conditions are making Indian Christians accustomed to the salary system for Christian workers, and other business-like arrangements for carrying on religious work, we will find that deep down in the minds of several good men there is a lurking

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fear that all this is something un-Christian and unspiritual. There is a similar attitude towards organizations also. Organizing Christian work is generally considered to be something which is antagonistic to spiritual life. Organizations and constitutions set up for carrying on Christian work are looked upon as denying the very purpose of religion."

With this protest many missionaries would agree—the difficulty is to find the spirit of self-sacrifice in the Christian community that will force men to leave all and follow Christ. Too often in the past the missionary has done too much for the converts, and he has been looked upon as a kind of "fairy godmother" who can supply all their wants. Still, there are hopeful signs that the Indian mind itself is beginning to protest against this coddling. "Good mother is bad mother to me." If we could raise up bands of wandering Christian Sannyasi it would be a great step forward, and I believe the Indian Christian community, poor as it is, would support all such that might arise.

Another Indian writes—

"For the fulfilment of this ideal it is necessary that the Indian Christian Church should strive to employ suitable methods and men. The choice of workers is a problem which is yet to be solved. The discussion of this matter of supreme importance finds a place in your programme, and it will be

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initiated by one who is making a practical study of it in his own life and work. Some of us are persuaded that the *Rajasik* method, now so common in Christian missionary efforts, must be replaced. The warning given by the financial disabilities of foreign missions cannot be ignored by us. With a laity which is still far from wealthy, the support of missionaries is an ever present problem difficult of solution. Shall our ideal be a school of Christian *Sannyasis*, whose voluntary choice of poverty will absolve the Indian Church of a great burden while it will, by approximation to Indian ideals of the religious life, make it easier for the preacher of the Word to command the attention of his countrymen ? The missionary education of the layman must continue, and by degrees he must realize the responsibility that is wholly his, for feeding and clothing the men and women who by their renunciation and poverty shall impress the Christ-life and ideal on the people of this land. India, the Mother, hungers for the Child ; her mother-love yearns for Him. Through the ages she waits for the advent of the Eternal Son whose star of birth was seen on her eastern sky.”<sup>1</sup>

New methods of evangelization are needed, but how they are to be got I have no idea. But I do feel that it is not preaching that is going to bring in

<sup>1</sup> The *National Missionary Intelligence*, February, 1926, p. 33.

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the Kingdom of God. It is the power of a Christian life—or, in the plural, Christian lives. Somehow the power of the gospel oozes out of the consecrated life, and this fact is our strongest force. Men see our good works and come to glorify our Father who is in Heaven. Still more if we can get men to see the character of Jesus, and for this the gospel story itself is the place. There He stands out as a Man above all men, and if thus seen He convinces. To this end the sale of Gospels is a vital factor, and one cannot too highly praise the work of the great Bible and Literature Societies which provide these for our work. Very often the reading of them is the beginning of an interest that leads to acceptance of the Christian ideal.

An interesting experiment has been made in community life by the beginning of the Ashram at Tirupattur. It is one of two I know of in India—that is Christian Ashrams—and is closely connected with the National Missionary Society of India—an Indian Christian Society which has an annual income from contributions of over half a lac of rupees—about £4,000. This Ashram is an interesting experiment, although at the time of writing (1927) it has still only two members—both medical men, one Indian and one Britisher.

In an article in the *Christian Patriot*, Dr. Jesudasan, the Savak (servant) of the Ashram, explains the basis of the society of the Ashram as follows :—

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“It is laid down in the constitution that permanent members should be unmarried. They should give up all personal property, but are quite free to dispose of their possessions in any way they like. What they decide to give to the Ashram goes towards a ‘common fund’ held by a board of trustees of whom two shall be permanent members and one appointed by the Executive of the National Missionary Society of India. The trustees will carry out the unanimous decisions of these members in the expenditure of this money.

“Now no fellowship or friendship could be made to order. It must be a growth through loving, personal intimacy. I am learning more and more that the secret of true and lasting fellowship is the secret of (or rather the grace for) forgiving one another. For to *For Give* is to—*give much*, i.e., to love. Hence it is laid down in the constitution that no one shall be elected to permanent membership excepting after a period of three years’ continuous stay at the Ashram.

“But then there will be men and women, married or unmarried, who, while unable to satisfy the condition of permanent membership, are still anxious to devote a short period of their life to this fellowship and service. To meet such a need, provision is made in the constitution

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for the admission of *temporary* members who decide to come and share the life of service of the Ashram for six months. These may after this period (if members and they agree) continue longer up to three years. Of course when they are at the Ashram they conform to the common life of the Ashram (and they have to leave their families behind if married). We have had several temporary members in the past with us, who have been a great help and inspiration to us.

“Then again, we have had several who have been with us for shorter periods as volunteers or visitors.

“Thus the family is constituted. All are expected to do any form of service however ‘menial’ or humble, such as sweeping or cooking or carrying patients, etc. As members of the family are drawn from different parts of India (literally from the Punjab to Tinnevely) the common language is English. Both Europe and Asia are represented, although at present we are only a very small family.

“The Ashram is not attached to any denomination. The *only* condition of membership is ‘FAITH AND DEVOTION TO JESUS CHRIST.’ Members may belong to any nationality, but they shall consider themselves as citizens of the Kingdom of God, placing loyalty to Christ above everything.

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“ At the same time this is not an attempt to start any new sect, rather it is an attempt to unite in loving fellowship and service members of all Christian denominations, moved by common ideals of service for the advent of the Kingdom of their Lord.

“ At present the only two permanent members are medical men, and the only form of service possible for them is naturally medical. But it is earnestly expected God will bring into this fellowship others gifted with different talents, who will find here ample scope for developing new forms of service other than medical.”

Could we not make much more use of the Guru method? At present theological education in India differs little, except in quality, from that of the West. Intending pastors are required to attain to a certain level of general education before they are allowed to take up their theological studies, and when these begin they are of the usual Western kind and largely conducted by Western scholars. They do good work, excellent work, and we would bear testimony to it, but the curriculum pursued was developed in the West. We need theological curricula worked out with a view to giving the average student of theology a training which will fit him for his work as a pastor and preacher of Christianity in India. There is a widely-expressed feeling that the theological schools in India make



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but a poor job of this task. There is an utterly inadequate provision made to help men in the task of relating Christianity to the rich Indian heritage. They teach theology of a Western character, and most of their pupils acquire enough knowledge of this subject to be ever afterwards bound to it—they never acquire enough knowledge of it to make them entirely free. The Theological Colleges should make far more use of men who are authorities on Hindu and Mohammedan culture—not Christian missionary scholars who have acquired a knowledge of these cultures but have never lived in them, but men who are the acknowledged leaders of these great societies and who could give us the spirit of them as well as the letter. Then I think every intending pastor or ordinand should have spent a period of time in a Hindu Ashram or centre of learning, not in a propagandist spirit, but in a spirit of learning and appreciation. Only thus can one get a knowledge, real knowledge, of the ancient Hindu religion and culture. Above all things it is necessary to understand the religious atmosphere that surrounds us in order to appreciate it, and also that Christianity may be brought into contact with it.

But instead of thus introducing a Western system of theological education, with its lecturers and tutors, its class examinations and terminal examinations, its diplomas and degrees, could we not have a system of

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Guru teaching? Found a community not in the large cities where the crowds are, but in some beautiful country place where Nature is, and there let some of the Christian saints take up their abode. Living expenses would be very small, a little agriculture and dairy farming might make the community self-supporting. Thither let the students of Christianity resort for their teaching, and let it be imparted only when sympathy has been established between teacher and pupil. From whom did we learn most at the University? Was it not from those Professors with whom we had most personal contact and sympathy? So in the proposed Ashram, theological talks and discussions should be permitted only between those of mutual sympathy.

Over one per cent. of the population of India is now Christian. Is that not enough to secure the complete evangelization of India within a generation? If they were all men and women imbued with vision and steeped in consecration it would be enough. But not so. The Christian life too often is not related to that round about us. Christian communities now live complacent, self-satisfied lives, deluding themselves that they are the elect of God and looking on the "heathen" round about them as objects of pity. The Christians must first be evangelists—not an unnecessary statement to

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anyone who knows anything of certain branches of the field in South India at least. If these few millions could be stirred to real Gospel fervour we Europeans could retire from the field to-morrow. The burden of evangelizing India must be felt by the Indians themselves ; then and only then will they discover the best methods.

In the past fifteen years or so attempts have been made by the foreign missionary societies in India to transfer the responsibility for the mission work to Indians, the idea being to hand over the responsibility for mission work to the Indian Christian Church and community which must ultimately take over the task of evangelizing India. Various schemes of this nature have been launched by the larger societies, each one being made suitable for the area concerned. Such attempts have been briefly referred to as "Devolution in Missions."

Doubtless this movement has been stimulated by the somewhat similar transfer of control on the part of the Indian Government. In 1919 certain departments of public interest were handed over to the Legislative Councils from whom were appointed the Indian ministers. This also was devolution, but in the Mission work such schemes were in force about 1910, whereas Government did not move till 1919. But both movements can go back to the increasing national consciousness of India which this century has seen. Due to various

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reasons, which fortunately I have no need to trace here, India suddenly awoke at the beginning of this century and called for a share in her own concerns both national and provincial.

Missions have employed agents all along, and in some cases agents were doing responsible work. Missions had also founded congregations, and in cases where these were self-supporting they had been granted full self-government—that is in the missions of self-governing polity. But the work called by the technical name of “ evangelism ” had been kept a close preserve for the missionaries. Only foreign missionaries were allowed to sit on the Mission Councils which were the supreme governing body in the field of each mission. It was they who had the shaping of the policy and the spending of the budget sent out from the West.

Under various schemes Devolution Boards were formed, and Indians invited to share this work of council. It was considered that the creation of such boards would accomplish much and be the means of quickening the sense of responsibility on the part of the Indian Church for the evangelization of India. From this it was expected to follow that such boards would introduce new and more appropriate methods of evangelization and give a broader policy to the Boards. The Indian Church was expected to be thus benefited by the strengthening and the deepening of its spirit and the widening of

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its conception of the gospel, and from this it was thought that a new zeal and enthusiasm would arise for the work in which the foreign missionaries were engaged, and that by the contribution of workers and funds this work could be expanded.

So far as launching out on new and distinctive methods of evangelization more attuned to the Indian mind is concerned, these boards have done nothing. They have been too well nurtured by their missionary gurus for that to happen. When left to themselves they are more American than the Americans. They hold their correct number of meetings and appoint their committees quite regularly. They are careful and faithful in the disbursement of the foreign grants, and carefully supervise the schools on the lines laid down by the missionary societies. They carry on the evangelistic work just as the Western missionaries did—and so on. They have been faithful to tradition and nothing startling has happened. “Speaking generally, the boards have failed to quicken a desire in the Church for undertaking evangelistic work, or to arouse the young men and women to do some voluntary service, or to inspire acts of self-sacrificing service for the Church or for the country ; or to interest the members of congregations to any appreciable extent in raising funds for increasing the scope of the activities of the boards.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *The National Christian Council Review*, April, 1926, p. 210,

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There is no doubt that these Boards, even though mainly or largely composed of Indian members, are of foreign origin. They are distinctively Western in their character, and the Indian is not accustomed to handling their cumbersome and expensive machinery. They are out of touch with the Indian Church, and so long as they remain what they are so long will they remain out of vital relation with the Indian Church. Then the Indian Church has still a large and vigorous spirit of dependence ! The Indian Church is undoubtedly poor, but that is no reason for them to be so dependent on the West ; in fact there is little spirit of cheerful giving and little sense of doing voluntary work for the Kingdom. Of course it could not be expected that they should shoulder the financial burden of the present expensive mission work without a heavy subsidy from the West, but they show no signs of realizing their responsibility in the matter, nor is there any sign of the Church trying to evolve a cheaper and more economical machine which is able to carry on the work by indigenous methods. Some of the missions, especially those working in South India, have made an agreement whereby their grants of money to these mission fields will be reduced proportionately annually till they altogether disappear. Some have fixed one-twentieth, some one-fiftieth as the percentage of annual reduction, thus reckoning on them disappearing

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altogether in twenty or fifty years. It is too early yet to see how this will work out, but it is doubtful if any Indian Church could at any time in the next generation shoulder the present financial burden of the missions in their areas—at least on the present scale. If home grants are thus to disappear the work will have to be reorganized on a cheaper scale than at present.<sup>1</sup>

So long as Western money is available and Western missionaries control the work and supply the ideas, little or no progress can be expected here. The Indian Church is walking with a crutch, and to ask for co-operation on these devolution boards is not solving the problem. The all-important question of the control of finance crops up at all stages. The only practical way is for the Indian Church itself through its own Church Councils resolutely to take up the work of evangelization independently of the foreign missionary. How few of our Indian congregations really show an anxiety for the non-Christians living round their doors! True, they do occasional preaching—some churches do it regularly and have preaching bands which go out periodically with a view to doing some evangelistic work, but most of the Indian Christians still look to the foreign missionary to do what is needed. It is the task of the foreign Missionary Societies

<sup>1</sup> No branch of the Church in India has ever been free of foreign association.

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and not of the Indian Church to evangelize India—so it is thought, and in saying this, I am not forgetting that the Indian Church in Tinnevely has a Missionary Society of its own, which curiously enough does not work among the Tinnevely people at its own doors where only one in fourteen is Christian, but goes off to Dornakal for its field of labour—some hundreds of miles away ! And there is also the National Missionary Society of India doing useful work. But all such work is on a small scale compared with what it might be and should be if the Indian Church had a real missionary zeal. The Indian Church should now start evangelistic work on its own account independently of either Western money or Western ideas. Using indigenous methods of their own and employing whatever money is available out of their own resources—be it small or great—they should themselves shoulder the responsibility at present being very largely carried by the Western Missionary Societies. India has behind her—and indeed not yet altogether behind—a large and worthy heritage of self-denial and self-sacrifice for the sake of religion. Why is it not so evident among the Indian Christian community as it ought to be ?

Then, launching out with their own resources and their own methods the Indian Church would be expected to gradually assume the responsibility, and the Western missionary would hope soon to



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retire to his native land. This is a policy that would have far greater chances of success in associating Indians with the problem than has the present scheme of Devolution Boards. Such schemes should receive no financial assistance whatever from foreign sources, in fact it is time that the Indian Churches told the Missionary Societies with which they may be connected that they will no longer accept subsidies in any form or undertake the responsibility of the disbursement of mission funds or the administration of foreign mission affairs or finances. Politely and courteously telling the foreign missionary this, it should add a willingness to be consulted on mission problems in general and in its own area in particular. Thus would there be some hope of the Indian Church ending its present somewhat parasitic career. It may be replied that the Indian Church is too poor to be able to do this. If so, does that mean that Christianity is too expensive for India, and must continue to be subsidized by the West? I do not think so. Such an argument gains the semblance of plausibility only because Christianity has come to India in a Western garb, with all the expensive trappings of the West—which are not at all essential. To some Indians the only time they ever sit on a chair or a bench is at church. At all other times they are quite happy to sit on the ground. Then why should the Church provide benches or chairs and thus add to its expense?

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This is the kind of thing that goes on and which adds to the "cost" of "Christianity"! All unnecessary and even bad. The Indian, like every other human being, can pay what is necessary for the support of his religious ordinances, and is willing to do so; but they must be in his form and not in European form. That is the difference and it can be remedied.

With the West supplying most of the money for our evangelical work it is almost inevitable that the spirit of master and servant enters into our relations. So long as the West pays the piper it will continue to call the tune. What we want is a brotherhood in India in which both foreigners and Indians should be on the same level and normally accept finance only from India. Within the Church in India there are resources of evangelization yet untapped. Indian Christians are not shown the need, and for lack of knowledge do not show a keen interest in evangelism. They need to be educated up to their responsibilities, and then having compassion they will preach the Gospel. The problem of un-Christian Christians is always with us. The difficulty is not money but indifference.

## CHAPTER X

### INDIAN INTERPRETATION

“ WHEN I think of this field in regard to Christianity, I always remember the parable of the sower. If there was any soil that would have yielded thirtyfold, sixtyfold, an hundredfold and even a thousandfold it was this. But unfortunately under the Catholic and then Protestant régime, the sower that came did not know the true nature of the soil, nor of the seed, and consequently made a mess of the whole. It is sad to confess that under both of these régimes, Christianity came not as the Kingdom of Heaven, but as the kingdom of this world, being loaded with Europeanism, Imperialism, and such other things belonging to their or even the nether world. It came very like Mohammedanism in the past. The only solitary exception on a noteworthy scale was the work of Robert de Nobili and some of his followers for about a couple of centuries, work which came to a sudden end in South India owing to the war between the French and the British, and ‘ the conquest of the country by the Europeans ’ to use the words of the Abbé Du Bois.”<sup>1</sup> So runs a paragraph in a paper read by an Indian before a meeting of the All-India Council of the National Missionary Society held at Calcutta in December, 1925.

<sup>1</sup> *National Missionary Intelligence*, Feb., 1926, p. 34.

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In similar strain Meredith Townsend writes, "The missionary never becomes an Indian or anything which the Indian could mistake for himself. The influence of civilization is too strong for him. He cannot help desiring that his flock become 'civilized' as well as Christian : he understands no civilization not European, and by unwearied admonition, by governing, by teaching, by setting up all manner of useful industries, he tries to bring them to his narrow ideal. That is, he becomes a pastor on the best English model, part preacher, part schoolmaster, part ruler ; always doing his best, always more or less successful, but always with an eye to a false end—the Europeanization of the Asiatic—and always acting through the false method of developing the desire of imitation. There is the curse of the whole system, whether of missionary work or of education in India."

Things have changed a little since Townsend wrote thus, but not materially. Missionaries are still under the dominance of Western influence, and how can it be otherwise ? They are of western race, they are brought up in western countries, go to western universities and study largely western literature and thought. All the most impressionable years of our lives are spent in the West. We come out East fully developed, and usually with developed and firmly set characters and dispositions. Coming out East in such circumstances and finding ourselves in such entirely

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different and unthought of surroundings, with a different history, a different ethic and of a different race, how could it be other than that we should take the line of least resistance and endeavour to maintain our old ideals of civilization and life in these new surroundings? After all, we in the West are a greater people than those in the East—especially so if we happen to be British! Do we not belong to a great Empire upon which the sun never sets, whose inhabitants are more numerous than the sand upon the seashore or the stars in the Milky Way? And surely this position has been built up by our superior Western civilization. If so, why exchange this for the Eastern? If this is not just the exact question—then it is this: Great Britain is greater than India. Great Britain stands for Western civilization, India for Eastern. If India would only give up this conservative and useless civilization, then she would be a greater country than she now is. Such has been the unconscious working of some of our minds, though when faced with it thus bluntly, most of us would vehemently deny it.

Under such influences even the best Indian converts not only became correct Anglicans or Presbyterians or Congregationalists, but they swallowed along with their religious beliefs the manners and customs of their teachers and masters. They aimed at becoming Englishmen, or Scotsmen, or Americans, and they were successful. It is no won-

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der that such a man as Dr. Narayan Sheshadri could say of himself, "I am just a black Scotsman." They not only became Christians, they also became Presbyterians or Anglicans, and we might also say that they became "European."

The results of this phase of Christian Missions in India have been disastrous in the extreme. Till now, except in some small areas where the European has been withdrawn and the work given entirely into Indian hands, the Indians are more European than the Europeans ! They have been so carefully schooled in Western methods that they now excel their masters.

Then again there are Indian congregations which have been introduced to Western music under the tutorship of their missionary seniors and have had this for so long that now they have no taste for their Indian music. Their services are notable for the lusty and beautiful singing of the solid German hymn rather than the delicate Indian lyrics. In fact, these particular churches have acquired almost a dislike for Indian music. At every service it is Western music which they use. So it is with the Anglican Church largely. After attending a service at which the Bishop and I were the only Europeans present, the former remarked that the service was just a bad copy of Matins as sung at Westminster Abbey ! And so it was—a bad copy !

As with music so it is with the whole form of service. The Anglican Church in India uses the

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liturgy of the Book of Common Prayer—translated into the various languages. The other denominations use those forms of order of service which their parents in the West have come to adopt after long usage. The sermon has come to be the accepted thing in all services, and periods of silence the unusual thing. Now, remember that the Hindus, who form by far the larger part of the population of India, and who provide the Christian Church with by far the larger part of its converts—have no organized worship of this nature at all. Certainly they worship at their Temples and shrines, but it is not organized worship and there is nothing there at all corresponding to our sermon. Go to the Temple at Madura and see there the crowds of Hindus engaged in devotions, and no one can doubt that a real spirit of worship exists ; but it has no congregational element. And, after all, how much is attained by our present congregational services for worship ? How often is the spirit of reverence and devotion missing from them !

There is a place for the Christian minister to exercise his ministry of teaching, but I doubt very much whether in India the pulpit with its sermon in the middle of the devotions is the place for it. Worship and teaching might well be separated in India—if not also in the West.

Then we have introduced the Church's calendar into the East, with peculiar anomalies. It is amusing in a country part of which never knows snow to

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see an imitative manger at Christmas time covered with artificial snowflakes ! Or to hear a congregation bid frost, hail, fire and snow to praise the Lord and magnify Him for ever. In the West a farmer who sows his seed is certain of a crop. It may be good or it may be poor, or it may even be bad—but he gets something. Not so in India. Here time and time again a farmer sows seed and in doing so he is merely wasting money, for he gets absolutely nothing in return. The seed rots in the ground. It is all dependent on the rain. Now in the south, at least on the West Coast, the first rains are due to arrive in April or May. When the peasants are watching with anxious eye for the first signs of rain clouds and later the monsoon, the Church bids them celebrate Easter or Whitsuntide—both supremely times of rejoicing. How can they rejoice, bearing within them such anxious hearts ?

The Church buildings are the same. They have been introduced from the West without alteration. I have in mind a building in which I attended service in a village a little north of Madras. It measured about sixty-five by thirty feet. The men sat on one side and the women on the other—families were broken up in order to maintain this sex division. It had mud walls and mud floors and a thatched roof, two doors and three small windows. At some time or other the walls had been white-washed—but not recently. Opposite one of the doors there was a small raised platform—perhaps



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eight inches above the general level of the floor. The furniture consisted of a table and three chairs on this platform, and about fourteen or twenty forms. The congregation was about forty persons and I should not think the building cost more than Rupees 120—about £10. There was not a spot of colour or a thing of beauty in the place—excepting some of the congregation ! It was a Presbyterian Church and it would have satisfied the eye of the wee-est of the Wee Frees of Scotland for plainness ! The next week I was in the Temple at Madura and could not refrain from making contrasts in my own mind. Here they use colour and imagery almost to excess. The kind of art portrayed at Madura does not appeal to some of us as beautiful, but it is doubtless considered so by others, and they are the people who use the Temple. The massive monolithic carving and the delicate detail, the idols and the mythical figures, the gold and silver and colour all over the place—the lights and the smells, the candles and the ghee, the parrots and the bats, all go to make an indelible impression of something which if not religious is somehow felt to be very near it. And surely it expresses the Indian mind and genius much better than do our Christian Churches.

The root of all this evil, of course, lies in the fact that Christianity came to India as a foreign faith—a foreign religion. For years it was regarded as such and not a voice was raised. Supremely it was associated with the British, who were the

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ruling race in India ; and when an Indian became a Christian he was at once denationalized. He then began to prefer to talk in English if he was educated enough to do it ; it was below his dignity to talk the native language.<sup>1</sup> Instead of wearing a cloth round the body and a turban on the head, it was now necessary to wear trousers and a coat, boots and a sun hat. Some of the results were really comical—still more among the girls who were largely clothed out of the missionary boxes sent out by kind friends at home. These set the fashion in ladies' dress ; and in parts of Central India to-day it is very difficult to get the girls and educated women to give up the old ugly blouse and skirt of our grandmothers' time and to return to the much more suitable and beautiful Indian ladies' dress. That is a real problem in some of the girls' schools up north. Continuing to wear these Victorian clothes simply draws attention to them, and they are made the butt of all kinds of insulting remarks till it is almost dangerous to allow them to travel alone to and from school at the beginning and end of term.

This century has seen amazing strides in Indian national consciousness, and with the introduction of the political reforms of 1919 this consciousness has grown. Now one side-issue of this growth has been to show to the Indian Christian community how strongly and universally they are identified in

<sup>1</sup> I know Indian Christian families who speak English at home, and whose children know no vernacular.

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the minds of their fellow nationals with the ruling power. In all the controversies of the last ten years or so the Indian mind consciously and unconsciously classed the Indian Christian as a Pro-Britisher, till the idea of a Christian who also was a Home Ruler came to be almost unthinkable and a contradiction in terms. This situation has driven the community to examine its position, and it seems to have realized with somewhat of a shock what its real position is. Fortunately this examination has been done by Indians and not by Westerners. Now one of the catchwords of the Indian Church is "An Indian expression of Christianity."

It has been the privilege of the West to be allowed to bring to the East the germs of Christian life—but we have been in great danger of confining the growth of these too rigidly to Western forms. In nothing is this transplanting more apparent than in the buildings in which the worship takes place. Already we have referred to the Western form of most Christian places of worship. Those who from infancy have been brought up in such a place, even if it is but a poor imitation of a Western church, sometimes acquire a love for the place for the sake of its spiritual associations, if not for its intrinsic beauty of form. But why should we not take the Indian form of architecture which is so appropriate in this land of sunshine and adapt it to Christian uses? Christianity will modify it, as it did the basilica of old days, but we should use it. Too

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often in India the churches have been strictly utilitarian and severely plain—and even when real beauty of form has been attained, it has been on Western models and probably has failed to appeal to the Eastern mind. Can there be any doubt that in a church of really Indian character, worship is easier for the Indian than in surroundings which suggest an alien race?

Both the Hindu and the Mohammedan worship to a large extent in the open air. In the mosque only a small part is roofed—the privacy necessary for worship is secured by the wall surrounding the court in which the majority worship under the canopy of heaven. In the Hindu Temple the shrine is small and the surrounding court large, while many of the Hindu's devotions are performed on the banks of rivers or under trees. Could the Christian Church not adapt itself to like buildings? In the Moradabad district of the United Provinces experiments are being made in this direction.<sup>1</sup>

There they have built churches which consist of a covered part measuring about fifty feet by twenty-five feet, with a central dome and lantern, covered with a globe and cross and four minarets, opening out through a large arch into an open court. This court measures some fifty feet by fifty feet. The outside walls are ornamented with simple recessed arches, and the entrance is surmounted by a cross. Round the three sides of the court,

<sup>1</sup> See the *National Christian Council Review*, January, 1926.

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away from the covered part which forms the chancel and sanctuary of the church, run cloisters eight feet broad. These supply additional accommodation in hot weather, and are useful for group meetings as for Sunday Schools. In the open court a few trees could be planted and a few creepers cultivated, and these would add colour and beauty as well as give shade in the hot weather. Certainly great beauty has thus been obtained—and they are churches which are Indian, not western at all. The dome on a building is usually associated with Hindu temples, minarets with Mohammedan mosques. Could we not adopt some other equally beautiful architectural form already associated with church architecture? What about the turrets of typical Armenian churches—would they be appropriate in the smiling plains of India or do they require the sterner background of Asia Minor to make them look their best? Still, this is a great step forward, and one would wish to see such churches grow and multiply all over India. They are open all day and every day—not merely for three hours on the Sunday and then carefully double padlocked for the rest of the week. Worshippers should be able to come at all hours to pay their devotions and give the worship of their souls.

In such churches I would make full use of colour, and of flowers and leaves. Scriptural scenes might be depicted in colour on the walls, if a good artist

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were available. If they were not grotesque figures of the Master, the apostles and saints, I would not prohibit them. I would have a dado of coloured flowers and leaves embossed in clay right round the wall on the inside.

Should we not go further and provide some kind of shelter for passing pilgrims? In such churches as I have detailed above would it be possible to set apart for pilgrims of all religions, say, one of the cloisters where they could come and take rest on their long and weary marches from shrine to shrine? Or better still provide some porch-like structure, not opening directly into the inner court, where pilgrims could rest for a while from the heat of the day or even spend the night? In suggesting this I am not unconscious of the kind of pilgrim one sometimes gets in India—the dirt and filth—but I think it is a scheme worthy of consideration.

An Indian speaker at a Calcutta conference lately expressed the hope that “the day may be near when the call of the Muezzin to prayers shall be in the name of Jesus, and the evening bells and the blowing of the conch-shell in the temples shall proclaim the Arathi of Christ the Lord of India.”<sup>1</sup>

“Have not some of us dreamt of a Temple dedicated to the Crucified, wherein gathers a vast assembly of reverent and barefooted devotees, with bent heads and folded hands, to listen with rapture to the eternal story of the Cross as it is unfolded by a

<sup>1</sup> *National Missionary Intelligence*, February, 1926, p. 33.

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Sannyasi priest whose renunciation is greater than that of a Chittaranjoris or a Gandhi? Have not some pictured to themselves a House of God where in the outer courts Bhaktas gather together for sankirton (the worship of songs), while others foregather for spiritual communication, and yet others seek out quiet places for communion apart with the Master? And the temple gates do not close after the hours of appointed worship, for men and women love this House of God and wait at its doors at all times of the night and day.”<sup>1</sup>

May it come true !

From church buildings we turn naturally to church services, and here one is amazed at the similarity between Indian Church services and English Church services. It is retorted that both being Christian this is not to be wondered at. But it is to be wondered at. In Indian religious life there is nothing like the Church Service, where a hymn alternates between prayer and scripture reading, and the whole is a wearisome process of getting up and sitting down so that the rest of at least twenty minutes assured by the sermon is to be welcomed ! Contrast this with the devotions in the Hindu Temple at say Madura or Conjeeveram.

One would wish to see a great change in the form of Christian worship in this country. Although the congregational element is absent from Hinduism

<sup>1</sup> *National Missionary Intelligence*, February, 1926, p. 33.

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it is probably fundamental to Christianity and must be retained. They who love the Lord Jesus in truth feel a necessity to come together for praise and worship, but I much doubt whether we need make the sermon the central act of worship as is now done in so many churches. After all if we put it to ourselves very frankly, does the sermon accomplish much? It is a great strain on the pastor to be under the necessity of preaching weekly at least two sermons, and to prepare these takes up an inordinate proportion of his time, which would perhaps be put to better advantage in visiting his congregation and influencing them by his character.

In prayer the important element, at least in the Indian interpretation of it, is meditation. "That costly sacrifice of prayer." Yet in our churches, more often than not so far as the congregation is concerned, it is neither costly nor a sacrifice. Our minds very easily, far too easily, wander. If we could have periods of silent prayer, perhaps with our thoughts reverently guided by the minister, we could the better realize the meaning of prayer.

Then also probably in the majority of our churches there is no necessity to provide pews, chairs or benches. The people are accustomed to sitting on the floor, and it would suffice if we merely provided some cheap straw mats for them to sit upon. This would more easily allow the element of prostration to take its place in worship—a beautiful Indian custom which I have seen only in one



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Christian church, though very probably others also engage in this act of reverence.

One Indian writes—

“Why may not our ministers wear the saffron-robe, the proud, ancient garb of the Indian Sadhu? Why need we ape the West with cassock and surplice? How dare Christian Indians strut to the Holy of Holies with leather-shod feet? The very thought is repulsive to Indian minds. Why should the turban or head-dress be removed in church, when according to Indian culture it is disrespectful to uncover the head in the presence of a superior, and much more so before the Creator? The Epistle to the Corinthians has not decided these observances for India. Where has faded the dulcet music of our Motherland that we borrow Western forms for our public worship? Christ came to fulfil, not to destroy the Jewish Law, and it is the same with regard to the nobler elements of true Hindu Law—*Bhakti Marga*.”<sup>1</sup>

There cannot be a Christ peculiar to any clime or country. But I venture to ask if there cannot be a Christianity whose forms of worship are peculiar to a nation, and to India, a nation which boasts of a rich heritage of culture and philosophy, of simplicity and earnestness?

I have already referred to the music used in our worship, and undoubtedly the Christian Church has denied itself a powerful and delightful element in

<sup>1</sup> *National Missionary Intelligence*, Sept., 1926, pp. 191-2.

## Indian Interpretation

worship by giving such a small place to music. The Indian—at least the Hindu devotee—gives music a large and prominent place, and surely it is far better that our congregations should engage in Indian lyrical music rather than sing translations of Western hymns to German hymn tunes—good music as they are. They are western, and Indian music differs from western music very profoundly. Sometimes it is difficult for us missionaries to appreciate the beauty of Indian music, but it ought nevertheless to be encouraged. The bhajan or song-service in which all take part should be encouraged. “All over Bengal the song service sways and enthral great masses of people and, not seldom, effects cures and conversions.” With Indian music you can always get a crowd. I have seen an Indian crowd—non-Christian—sit for three hours at a stretch almost without a movement entranced by a native musician telling the story of the Prodigal Son in song. I did not enjoy it, but from the look on the faces of the crowd I could see its strength and how eagerly they listened to the story. It was a great strain on the musician, who was perspiring freely and obviously pouring out his soul in music, yet many are prepared to do this. “Nothing will capture the imagination of India as Christianity expressed through song.”

The difference in worship is the difference in religious nature. The Westerner is active and wants to be moving all the time. The Indian is con-

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templative and wants to meditate. We should make greater provision for this element in our services.

We might with profit adopt some of the forms of the services of the Society of Friends, and meet together for worship in which silence plays a great part. Have no "Order of Service," but as each or any is moved to contribute to the meditation let him or her do so.

Then there is also the question of festivals on which I have already touched. The Christian festivals in the Church grew up in many cases quite late—it was some centuries before the Church began to celebrate Christmas—and the times of the festivals were not always decided by scholarly chronological research ! But that is not important. Now I do not know enough about the Hindu calendar to make suggestions as to what festivals the Christian Church in India might keep. In the South, late in the year, there is a great festival when all good Hindus consecrate anew the tools by which they earn their sustenance. The carpenter will take his mallet, the clerk his pen, the coolie his mamootie, and offering them at the Temple will give thanks for them and for what they mean to him. I see no objection to the Christian Church adopting a similar festival, and I am sure there are others equally beautiful which could be adopted. In the Hindu life festivals play a great part. Why should they not do so in the Christian life ?<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The full possibilities of the Harvest Festival do not seem to be realised as yet by the Church in India.

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From worship we pass naturally to religious instruction. In the Christian Church this is given before baptism and maintained afterwards largely by the sermons from the pulpit on Sundays. Now in Hinduism if one desires instruction in religious truth it is to be got only from the guru. Before it is imparted intimate personal contact is established with the disciple or "chela." The two live together for a while, sometimes months—getting into contact with each other and understanding each other before any religious instruction is given. Only after the chela has given sufficient evidence of his capacity for receiving the teaching is it given. Could the Christian Church not adopt a similar method?

We will complete this section dealing with the "externals" by briefly referring to the place of religion in family life and in social life. It is a subject deserving of much fuller treatment than can be given to it here, and I must content myself with stating the contrast. For a Hindu, religion is bound up with his family life—every day brings its obligations to the Divine, indeed they are not separate obligations, for his whole life is a religious life. That many fail in this is to be admitted, but still a good Hindu would miss anything rather than his daily worship in the home. There he has his sanctum which is respected by all, and he begins his day in worship and ends it in worship. His family system has a religious basis and his social

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life also. What can the Christians substitute for this ? Family prayers doubtless—but they do not. Too often they imitate the West and keep their religious observances for the Sunday and even then not every Sunday.

Will men arise within the Christian Church in India imbued with a sense of devotion to their Lord and a mission to express Christianity in an Indian garb ? It would be simple folly to imagine either that this can be done in a day or that if done it would mean the conversion of India to Christianity to-morrow. It will probably need to be done piece by piece, “line upon line.” N. V. Tilak, a Brahmin by caste, was deeply under the influence of Bhakti religion before he became a Christian, and so it was that he was able to produce hymns of devotion which the Marathi Christian Church will always love to sing, and sing with much spiritual profit. We want other men in other fields. Who will lead the way for us in reforming our services for worship ? The Western missionary cannot do it ; in nothing does he feel his limitations of birth more. We do not understand the Indian mind ; at the best we catch but glimpses of it for short periods in particular subjects. But it flees us as swiftly as it approached us. The best of us, and that only after long residence in the country, approach an understanding ; we do not fully acquire it. It is ever surprising us by presenting itself in new light.

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Then we must also bear in mind that this Indian expression can be fully manifested in the Indian Church only in the natural course of its history. In other countries this has been so—it cannot but be so in India. Considering that for the greater part the Church in India is still young, that into that Church it has pleased God to call “not many wise,” “not many mighty,” “not many noble,” but the despised and the suppressed of the land, and that Christianity has not had a chance in India of being considered apart from its unwholesome political associations, as it happens to be the religion, nominally at least, of the alien race that rules India, it will take many more generations before we can expect it to become rooted in the Indian soil and grow as an Indian plant. The difficulties are great, and India is before all things conservative, so that the natives cling to theories and forms which did service for them in the past, but no longer do so. They are like a congregation I know at home which had a sand-stone pavement approaching the door of the church. After years and years of service the stone got worn, and on wet days the water stood there and the congregation had difficulty in maintaining dry feet when passing over it. Nevertheless the deacons would not lay down new stones, because of the sacred associations of the old ones which had been worn by the hallowed feet of generations of worshippers.

Yet the Churches in India should be given

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facilities whereby they could develop, under proper guidance, a church organization, church life and church worship in harmony with the religious spirit of India. But these are merely externals—outward changes and adjustments. The outward expression will be right only if the inward apprehension is right. This process will begin when the central teachings of Christianity are thought out afresh, and re-interpreted in the light of the best religious thought and experience of India. When this takes place the right expression will follow. Not that the supreme realities—Christ and God—need any Indian expression. They are surely above all expression—for they are timeless and cannot be expressed in time. Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. But our apprehension of Christ and our interpretation of the unique experience through which we pass when Christ touches our lives—these are things that need restatement from age to age.

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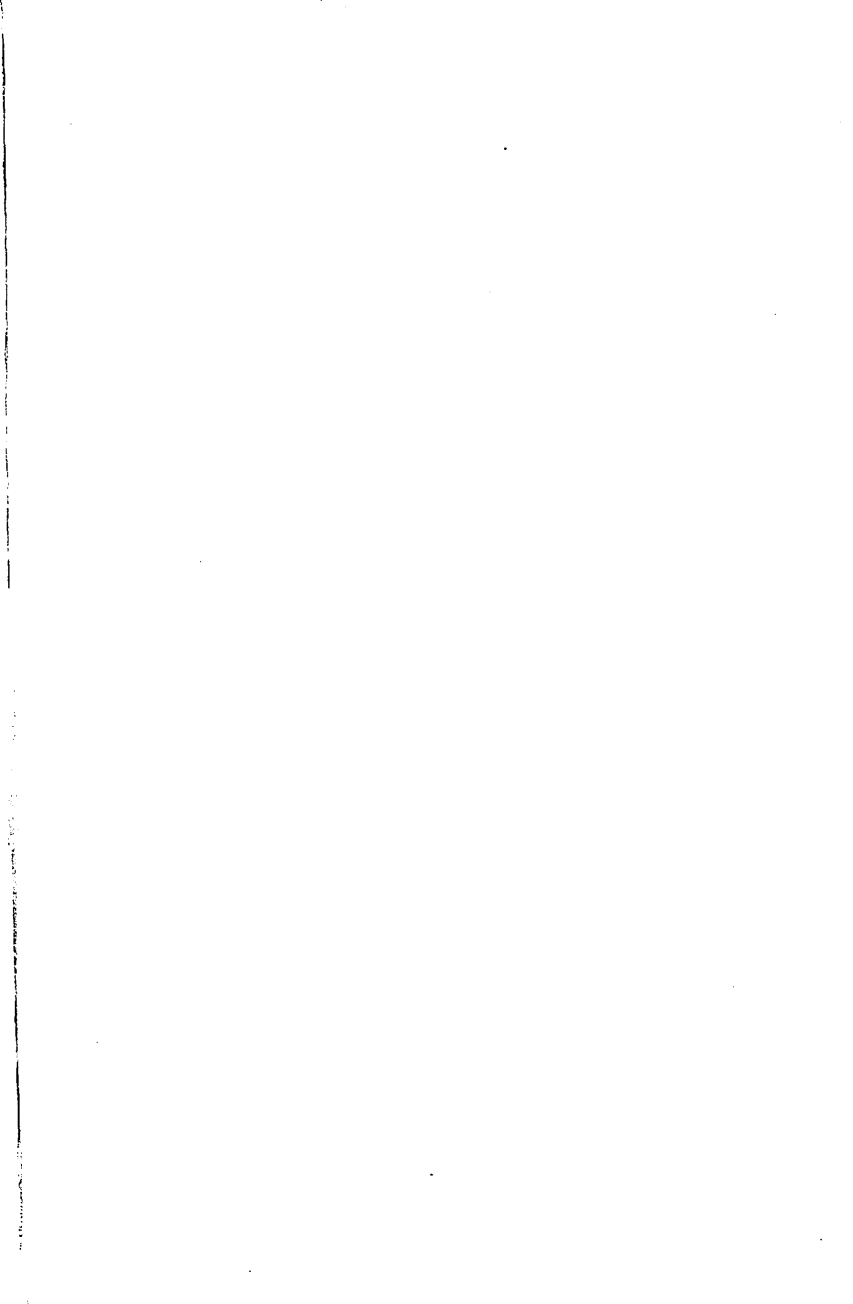
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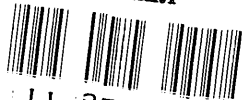
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